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The  
Imitation of Christ

By Thomas à Kempis



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The Four Books of the Imitation of Christ by  
Thomas Haemerlein or Hamerken, surnamed  
A Kempis. The Seraphic Edition made from the  
Latin by Father Thaddeus, of the Order of  
Friars Minor. With Remarks and Notes by the  
same, and the Life of the Author



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Of the  
Imitation of Christ  
By Thomas A Kempis



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Some Remarks on The Imitation of Christ. By  
Father Thaddeus, of the Order of Friars Minor.  
With Eulogies of the same Work and a Life of  
Thomas A Kempis



## Remarks on The Imitation of Christ By Father Thaddeus, Friar Minor



It has often been said, and seemed to be universally admitted, that none of our English versions of *The Imitation* are satisfactory. But this amounted to no more than a general assertion and a vague notion; nobody came forward to point out the particular defects or the bad renderings. And even had this been done, very much, yea, almost all, would still have been wanting; for to know the evil is one thing, but to apply the remedy is of still more consequence.

When we seek the cause of the errors, we cannot but be surprised at the incompetence of some translators, even among Catholics, not to mention others, who ought to have known better. Turn, for instance, to Book IV, Chapter x, 6: "O amplectendum et semper optandum servitium (status religiosi)." Challoner, rightly enough, has: "O service worthy to be embraced and always to be wished for!" The author of "A New Translation" (Burns & Oates) evidently considered the word "embrace" too affectionate, and, perhaps, exaggerated, so he toned it down and wrote, "O servitude lovely and ever to be desired." This same author translates "Si scires totam Bibliam exterius" by, "If thou didst know the whole Bible outwardly." Another cause of numerous mistakes is, no doubt, the want of attention to the context. In many instances it seems as if the translator had picked up his dictionary and taken the first English word he found. Look, for instance, at Book IV, Chapter xxx, 5: "Omne *onus* in gaudium transmutare," which he renders by, "To turn all thy *burden* into joy." Had he read a little further on in a fairly good dictionary, he would also have found "Onus,

sorrow." Another instance is found in Book IV, Chapter lviii, 6: "Sed est *distantia* incomparabilis," rendered by "incomparable *distance*." What is an incomparable distance? Had the translator not taken the first word he came across, if he looked at the dictionary at all (for he may have considered that superfluous in this instance), he would have come to, "Distantia, difference."

Finally, not the least cause of various errors is the ignorance of the meaning of many of the author's words and expressions. This was very properly pointed out by the reviewer of "The Autograph MS. of Thomas A Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*, reproduced in facsimile," in *The Month*, No. lxxv, March 1880. But, strange to say, neither the reviewer himself nor anybody else took the hint and acted on words of advice so clearly and correctly given. New translations and new editions continued to follow each other in rapid succession without the least material improvement. Take, for instance, Book I, Chapter iii, 3: "Quanto aliquis magis sibi unicus . . . fuerit." Challoner says, "The more a man is united within himself." Another, "The more a man is at one within himself." The author of the "New Translation" and Kegan Paul copy Challoner: "The more a man is united within himself." Sir Francis R. Cruise tries to improve: "The more a man is at accord with himself." In the most recent edition it is altered to, "The more a man is made one with himself." It seems surprising that such renderings have so long survived, and that, apparently, nothing was done to improve them. "Sibi unicus" is an idiom with a meaning of its own; and many such expressions occur.

But who will come to the rescue, and tell us the hidden and forgotten meaning of all these puzzling terms and expressions? The most competent and most accurate translator, or expounder if you like, of *The Imitation* is the famous and learned Jesuit,



Rosweyde. He spoke the same language as A Kempis, edited *The Imitation* from the original MS., and as there was not much more than a century between him and A Kempis, the language had not undergone many changes. His translation of *The Imitation* was published at Antwerp in 1617. It was based upon an older version by Nicholas van Winghe, Canon Regular of Saint Martin's at Louvain, whose first edition appeared in the year 1548, thus forming as it were a connecting link between A Kempis and Rosweyde. But the Jesuit revised and corrected the Canon's work, comparing it with A Kempis's Autograph, and his translation is in many respects original. He does not only give us a correct rendering, but, to make the meaning quite clear, he adds in some instances a word of explanation, which is often necessary and always useful. I have sometimes followed him in this, but, out of consideration for the Latin text, I point out the word thus added in a note. As I often refer to this great and good priest, it will not be amiss to give the barest possible outline of his life.

Heribert Rosweyde, a learned ecclesiastical antiquary, was born at Utrecht in 1569, and entered the Society of Jesus at Doway, in Flanders, when he was twenty years of age. His taste led him to examine the libraries of the monasteries in that city, until he was called to be professor of philosophy and divinity, first at Doway, and afterwards at Antwerp, where he obtained very considerable reputation. He died in 1629 at the age of sixty. He published, in 1607, *Fasti Sanctorum quorum vitæ in Belgicis Bibliothecis manuscriptæ asservantur*, which he intended as a specimen of a larger work, and which was the prelude of the immense collection by Bollandus and others under the title of *Acta Sanctorum*. He wrote many other works.\* There is also a good French translation, usually

\* A. Chalmers, *General Biographical Dictionary*.

called Marillac's version,\* which first appeared in Paris in 1631, but was afterwards revised and corrected. It is, of course, not to be compared with Rosweyde's translation, as it keeps too close to the Latin, which it generally imitates, and explains none of A Kempis's peculiarities.

It is almost superfluous to say that in making this translation I have not limited myself to these authors, but have consulted, wherever it was necessary or useful, a whole host of others, and thus arrived at the meaning of A Kempis, and succeeded, I hope, in giving it clearly, though I have tried to keep as much as possible to the original construction. By way of illustrating these remarks, let us take a seemingly difficult passage, Book I, Ch. v, 1: "Non te offendat auctoritas scribentis," which has been translated by: "Let not the authority of the writer offend thee." This is a very literal rendering, but certainly not what the author intended. By comparing a few early translations, the meaning becomes quite clear, and can be put in accurate and intelligible terms.

As the reviewer of the late Mr Kegan Paul's translation remarked in *The Month* for July, 1892, the meaning of some words in mediæval Latin differs often more or less from that which they generally convey. The instance there given, "Probabile argumentum," is very well chosen. There are many others. Some compound words in the Latin of *The Imitation* are literally translated from the Flemish, as, for instance, "inæquale, ongelucky, wrong," "attrahere, aentrecken, to meddle," "adstare, bystaen, to assist," etc. "Cito" generally means "easily," though not always; Rosweyde renders it by "lichtelyck." "Beatus" usually has the Scriptural meaning of "blessed" (not "happy"); Rosweyde says "Saligh." "Modicum," un-

\* Par M.P.P., i.e., Michel de Marillac, 1563-1632, Keeper of the Seals, nephew of Charles de Marillac, Archbishop of Vienne.

less the context requires otherwise, does not mean "little," but "a little while"; "Sequi" is "volghen, to follow," or "involghen, to indulge," etc. There are also terms which closely resemble the Flemish, and have the same meaning, such as "bene in pace, wel te vreden, content," "stare super aliquo, staet maken op iet, to rely or depend," practically never "to stand." Some words also, for instance, "Proprietarius," Book IV, ch. xxxii, 1, have a peculiar meaning, very different from what appears on the surface; the explanation may be found in the Notes at the end.

In the course of the work we meet with two quaint colloquial expressions, which have no equivalent in English, nor, perhaps, in any other language; they are noticed in their proper places.

The utility of the present work may be better shown by pointing out some of the defective translations found in previous editions: they are merely brought forward by way of illustration. I take the English rendering of Sir Francis R. Cruise, M.D., D.L., because his is the most recent Catholic translation, and almost the latest edition that has appeared in English.

### Book j

iii, 2. Et quid curæ nobis de generibus et speciebus.

And what need we concern ourselves about questions of philosophy?

ibid., 3. Quanto aliquis magis sibi unitus et interior simplicatus fuerit.

The more a man is at accord with himself and interiorly simple.

v, 1. Non te offendat auctoritas scribentis.

Let not the authority of the writer offend thee.

xiv, 3. Si rationi tuæ magis inniteris vel industriæ quam virtuti subjectivæ Jesu Christi.

If thou reliest more upon thine own reason or industry than upon the virtue that subjects to Jesus Christ.

xix, 5. Redde te tibi prout devotio tua desiderat.

Give thyself to thyself according as thy devotion shall incline.

xx, 1. Quære aptum tempus vacandi tibi.

Seek a proper time to retire into thyself.

xxj, 2. Et ad unionem se recolligere sanctæ compunctionis.

And recall himself to the union of holy compunction.

xxiv, 3. Quanto amplius . . . car-  
nem sequeris.

The more thou . . . followest  
the flesh.

### Book ij

j, 6. Si introisses in interiora  
Christi.

If thou hadst entered into Jesus  
inwardly.

ibid., 7. Cui sapiunt omnia prout  
sunt.

He to whom all things relish  
■ they are.

ibid., Qui ab intrascit ambulare.

He who knows how to walk  
inwardly.

ibid., Quantum homo sibi res  
attrahit.

As ■ man draws things to him-  
self.

iiij, 1. In malum trahit . . . ad bo-  
num convertit.

Turns into evil . . . turns to  
good.

ibid. Qui bene in pace est.

He that is at peace.

xij, 13. Patientiam recommen-  
dunt . . . pati velint.

Recommend patience . . . desire  
to suffer. (The assonance is  
lost.)

### Book iiij

v, 2. Ejus conversatio non cum  
popularibus.

His conversation should not be  
with the vulgar.

viiij, 2. Et da te totum pro Deo.

And give thyself wholly to God.

ibid. Si autem in te ipso steteris,  
nec sponte te ad voluntatem  
meam obtuleris.

But if thou wilt rest upon thy-  
self, and wilt not offer thyself  
freely to my will.

xiv, 2. Probabile.

A real and convincing.

xv, 3. Seque ab omni inordi-  
nato amore seu displicentia . . .  
evacuaverit.

And purify himself. (The asso-  
nance or allusion to the empty  
vessels is lost.)

xviiij, 4. Aperit sensum puris  
mentibus.

He discloseth his meaning to  
pure minds.

### Book iv

iiij, 1. Nec humano sensu pen-  
sanda.

And not to be weighed by the  
understanding of man.

ibid., 5. Multo pauperior quam  
dicere audeo.

Much more poor than I dare  
express. [Why fear to tell it to  
God?]

v, 2. Instrue ■■ disciplinis san-  
ctis.

Instruct me in thy holy disci-  
pline.

ibid., 3. Fert æqualiter omne in-  
æquale.

Bearcth with even mind all that  
is unequal.

ibid., Onus sine onere portat.

It carrieth ■ burthen without  
being burthened.

ibid., 8. Et ad voluntatem stare  
dilecti.

To stand resigned to the will of  
the Beloved.

vj, 2. Certare autem adversus  
incidentes malos motus animi.

But to fight against the evil  
motions of the mind which  
arise.

xj, 1. Sed ■■■■ voluntatis cupidus æmulator.	But earnestly zealous that my will be done.
xiiij, 1. Qui quærit habere privata.	He who seeketh private devotions.
xiv, 3. Ubi nihil aliud ■■ esse invenio quam nihil et nihil.	Where I find myself to be nothing else but nothing.
xvij, 2. Nimis enim casualiter stat.	For he standeth at too great a hazard.
xxj, 4. Apud te est os ■■■■■ sine voce.	My tongue cannot express the sentiments of my heart.
xxv, 2. Si neminem pateris adversarium.	If thou hast no adversity to withstand.
xxvi, heading. De eminentia liberæ mentis.	Of the surpassing benefit of a free mind.
xxx, 5. Omne onus in gaudium transmutare.	And turn all thy burthen into joy.
xxxij, 3. Dixi viliora tibi emenda pro pretiosis et altis in rebus humanis.	I have said that in human things the poorer should be bought in exchange for the precious and the lofty.
xxxiiij, 2. Sed in multis caligat oculus.	But in many. [Both Rosweyde and Marillac have "in many ways."]
xxxviiij, 2. Sed . . . falsa pietate delusi sunt.	But . . . were misled by mistaken compassion.
xlij, 1. Propter tuum sentire et convivere.	For the sake of thy contentment and his company.
xliv, heading. De non attrahendo sibi res exteriores.	Of not drawing to ourselves exterior things.
l, 6. Ne despicias peccaminosam vitam meam.	Despise not my most sinful life.
lij, 1. Præter omne proprium meritum dignaris consolari servum tuum.	Thou vouchsafest . . . to comfort Thy servant . . . beyond all his deserts.
liij, 1. Dei vacationem omnibus exterioribus antepone.	Prefer giving thy leisure to God before all external things.
ibid., 2. Sed . . . æger necdum capit animus.	But an infirm soul is not yet capable.

This list is by no means complete, and might be very much lengthened; but it will give an idea of the numerous mistakes with which the previous translations abounded. I may mention here that Sir Francis Cruise has inadvertently omitted the last sentence of Book IV, Ch. xxvj (*Inter hæc*). As regards the arrangement or order of the Books, I have followed A Kempis himself, and the two

reasons given by Sir Francis Cruise in his Preface seem to be conclusive. The first is that "the author of *The Imitation* understood best the sequence which he intended for the Books"; the second, that we should look attentively at "two chapters, namely, the concluding ones of the Book of the Holy Communion, and of the Book of Internal Consolation. Anyone who studies them must see that Chapter xviii of the Third Book is totally out of place as the 'finale' of the great spiritual treatise; while Chapter lix of the Fourth Book is its natural conclusion."

I have adhered to the division of the chapters into sections after the manner of Rosweyde; for, although this is not found in the original MS., it has generally been done from the beginning, and appears useful. The numbering of the sections is not invariably, but nearly, the same in all the editions.

I have added a short life of the author, which Rosweyde inserted in his editions, and which he had collected from various contemporary authors. I have supplied names and dates, and other little details where it was found advisable.

The Eulogies, or Praises of the Imitation, in forms which vary considerably, have been prefixed to the work from the seventeenth century, if not earlier; and I have made selections of them from an old Lyons edition, printed without date, and added some that are more recent.

I have followed the Autograph and Pohl's edition, but not his punctuation.

In a few instances, such as B. IV, ch. xxxj, 4, it seems almost necessary to read the few words supplied by Rosweyde into the text, which appears somewhat incomplete without them. They will be found in the Notes at the end.

The Life of Thomas A Kempis, by Rosweyde





# The Life of Thomas A Kempis

## by Rosweyde



**THOMAS HAMERKEN** or Haemerlein was born at Kempen, a small town of Prussian Westphalia, on the outskirts of the ancient Bishopric of Cologne, situated seventeen miles north-west of Dusseldorf, and fifteen miles north-east of Roermond; he was called "A Kempis," or "from Kempen," after his native place. His parents, John and Gertrude, were persons of no distinction and ill provided with worldly goods;

but they were rich in their piety, and noble by a blameless life. Thus, gaining their bread by the sweat of their brow, they lived quite content with the little they had received from God. Their union was blessed with two sons, John and Thomas. The former, having creditably gone through his course of studies at Deventer, where he made the acquaintance of Gerard de Groot, grew up in wisdom and in the fear of the Lord, and entered the Order of Canons Regular. He filled various offices in the Order with exemplary zeal and great profit to his brethren, and happily ended his virtuous life on earth in the year 1432.

The younger of the two brothers, Thomas, was born in 1379, when Urban VI was Pope and Charles IV Roman Emperor. He spent his childhood under the watchful eyes of his parents, and when he seemed fit for college life he was sent to Deventer at the age of thirteen. He was attracted to that town by the fame of the learned and pious priest, Florence Radewyns, who was Prefect of the House of the Brethren "of the Common Life," as they were called, because they had all things in common like the early Christians. † This Florence was highly esteemed and praised by all the students who frequented his school, in which the study of arts and sciences flourished to such a degree that it could be compared to the famous school of Athens among the Greeks.

When Thomas arrived at Deventer, his first care was to find his brother John, by whose advice and help he hoped to be admitted, for he had little or no money. He obtained a recommendation to the worthy priest, Florence Radewyns, whose predecessor, Gerard de Groot, had departed this life in 1384, when Thomas was but four or five years old. He was kindly received, and provided with board, lodging and books. And as he was naturally endowed with a good disposition and great aptitude, living now among men noted for their piety and learning, he imitated in his conduct

\* He was called Hamerken at Mount St Agnes and Haemerlein at Kempen.

† For details of this foundation, see Dom Vincent Scully's *Life of Thomas A Kempis*.

those whose company he enjoyed. He was diligent at home, painstaking at school, frequently at church; and the progress he made in a few years may be seen from his numerous writings, which cannot be too highly praised. During his stay at the House of the Brethren of the Common Life, he gave up all his earnings for the support of the community.

From early childhood he showed a singular devotion to Our Blessed Lady, and daily recited a set form of prayers in her honour. But his childish piety is wont to be inconstant and changeable, it happened that Thomas began to relax in his pious custom through carelessness; and by degrees he put off his usual prayers and invocations, now for one day, then for two or three days, and even for a whole week; and finally he abandoned them altogether. It was about this time that it seemed to him one night that he had a vision, in which it appeared that he was in the great hall of his master Florence, and, standing there among the other students who had assembled to hear the Word of God, and were listening attentively to the discourse, he saw the Mother of God descend from a high upon the clouds of heaven. And when she had come down into the hall in her glittering robes and with a smiling countenance, she passed along in the midst of the students and seemed to embrace now one, then another, with great affection, congratulating them on their diligence in listening to the pious instruction, and admonishing them lest in their youth they should lose any of the merits or fruits of the precious Blood of her dear Son. Thomas, beholding all this, and seeing how lovingly she embraced all of his companions, stood full of hope and expectation, as he followed her with his eyes, and said to himself: "I shall wait for my turn to the end, and when the Most Holy Virgin shall have given tokens of affection to all the others, she will assuredly not fail to do me the like favour; for although I have not shown her all the love she deserves, yet I have done in her honour the little I could." But Thomas was doomed to be disappointed in his fond hope, and experienced what was even worse. For when our Blessed Lady, having caressed and encouraged all the others, came at last to him, she cast on him a severe and reproachful look, saying: "In vain dost thou expect the kiss of peace, O cruel enemy, who, listening to the evil dictates of detestable indolence, dost not pay the dues of fervent prayer. What has become of thy customary invocations? Whither have thy usual devotions gone? Where are thy pious petitions, mingled with sighs? Has not thy love cooled, thy affection diminished, thy piety relaxed? And now, as if thou hadst done nothing amiss, thou boldly standest by and desirest a kiss, when thou deservest a severe scolding?" And turning away from him indignantly, "Go," she said, "go away from me; for he is not worthy of my embrace who has so lightly neglected his respects to his Queen." And leaving Thomas thus smarting under the well-deserved rebuke, she vanished out of his sight.

## The Life of Thomas A Kempis xv\*

Thereupon Thomas suddenly awoke, examined his conscience, perceived his fault, and promised amendment. And lest he might again be deprived of the caresses of his beloved Mother, he resumed his devotions to her with such fervour and fidelity, that he never omitted them for a single day during the remainder of his life. O blessed chastisement, which corrected the fault, which strengthened the bonds of love and effaced the blot of negligence! Thomas spent seven years with the priest Florence, under whose guidance he made such progress in virtue that all the brethren looked upon him as their model. The desire of greater perfection which his pious master had kindled in his heart, grew daily stronger; and at length Thomas resolved to enter the religious state. Accordingly, in 1399, not long before the death of his master and guide, Florence, which occurred in the 1400 year, Thomas directed his steps to Mount Saint Agnes,\* situated at no great distance from the town of Zwolle, where a community of Canons Regular, under the Rule of Saint Augustine, had recently been established. As it often happens that great things have but small beginnings, so this House, which afterwards became famous, was comparatively unknown and little appreciated by the inhabitants of Zwolle in those days. Arriving there with a letter of recommendation from his revered master, he was most cordially welcomed by his own brother John, who was then Prior of the new foundation, and together in a holy transport of joy they exclaimed with the Psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"†

The new candidate, though wholly desirous of giving himself entirely to God, nevertheless tempered his zeal with discretion. And well knowing that time generally brings counsel, he patiently tried his vocation for more than five years, applying himself the while to the exercises of a good religious.‡ On June 10, 1406, he received the habit of the Canons Regular, and in the following year, on the feast of Saint Barnabas, he consecrated himself to God by his religious profession. He now became to the whole community a bright example, by his piety towards God, his ready submission to his superiors and his fraternal love for his brethren. He was never idle, and, when not otherwise occupied, he spent his time in reading pious books, or copying them for the use of the community, or also in composing new works. And this, with the good intention of benefiting others, he commonly did at night after Matins, yet not without some injury to his own health. To this day may be seen a complete Bible, a large Missal and some of the lesser works of Saint Bernard, written by him with singular beauty

\* Or, "Agnetenberg."

† Psalm cxxxij.

‡ Perhaps, Dom V. Scully remarks, the explanation of this delay is rather to be sought in the condition of the House in which Thomas was received as a postulant.

and taste. It is impossible to express with what reverence he performed the ecclesiastical functions in church and oratory. In singing the Divine Office, he could be seen with eyes raised to heaven, as if filled with a holy ardour, and rapt in ecstasy by the sweetness of the Psalms. It sometimes happened, when he was standing upright in meditation, that his heels did not rest on the ground, which he only touched with his toes, as if even with the body he would fly up to heaven, where he was in mind and desire. During the psalmody he always stood erect, never leaning with his arms or back on the stalls. He was always the first to enter and the last to leave the choir. The Holy Office and its becoming performance were exceedingly dear to him; and when on a certain occasion one of the brethren made a jocose remark, saying: "No wonder he so zealously, joyfully and devoutly sang the psalms, because he relished psalms as much as salmon, which is an excellent kind of fish,"\* he promptly replied: "It is even as thou sayest: thanks be to God, the psalms are to me as salmon; however, they occasionally disgust me, and worry me to death, when I notice some brethren chanting without attention or devotion, and apparently afraid of injuring their voices."

His conversation always turned on God and Holy Scripture; and if he happened to be in the company of respectable persons who discoursed on worldly subjects, he seemed to be struck dumb, pretending to understand nothing of what was said; nor did he reply even if they addressed him, unless he thought that his answer might do some good. But when there was question of God and holy things, he was ever ready to speak, or rather the words flowed like a stream from his mouth. When he was asked to preach, he never refused, though he invariably took a little time to rest and meditate on his subject. So extraordinary a gift of speech did he possess, and so great was the impression which his words produced, that people flocked from far and near to Mount Saint Agnes to hear him preach.

His brethren were filled with admiration at the sight of his patience in adversity, and the spirit of charity with which he not only forgave an offence, but also excused the offender, whenever it was in his power. They were edified by his temperance, modesty and unceasing zeal in promoting the welfare of the community, by his solicitude for the beauty of the House of God, by his ardent devotion, the tears which he shed, and many other marks of his solid piety. So great was his contempt for the vanities and allurements of the world that, with the exception of those things which have God for their object, everything here below appeared to him undeserving of his attention, so much so that he would not listen to the names or descriptions of such things. And whilst he thus looked after the interest of his soul, he did not neglect to

\*The pun is perfect in Flemish, as the name of the fish "salm," is pronounced exactly like "psalm"; plural "psalmen, salmen."

## The Life of Thomas A Kempis xvij\*

keep his body in subjection; for on certain days in the week it was his custom to scourge himself, whilst reciting the hymn, "Stetit Jesus" ("Jesus stood").

He loved his cell and the reading of Holy Scripture so much that he speaking and writing he often made use of this sentence: *In omnibus requiem quæsi, \* et nusquam inveni, nisi in een hoexken met een boexken* † ("I sought rest in all things, and nowhere did I find it, but in a nook with a book"). And by these words he wished to imply that we can find no true rest here below, except in retirement and prayer.

Thomas was of such an affable and kind disposition that when still young he was chosen sub-prior by the unanimous votes of the whole community, though he was very reluctant to accept the office. It happened sometimes that when he was among his brethren, conversing with them, he felt within himself the attraction of divine grace. In such a case he would courteously take leave, as if he had made an appointment to meet some person, and retire to his cell, to pour out his heart before God; and it was there that he acquired the heavenly wisdom which pious people admire so much in his writings.

God also favoured his devout servant with revelations and visions. For, on a certain occasion, business of the Order took him from Mount Saint Agnes to Windesheim, where the prior, John Vos, of Heusden, was then lying ill. And, staying the night there, he beheld about the dawn of day a great number of angels preparing for the demise of a man of great dignity, whose soul they were about to carry up to heaven. And the evidence of his eyes was presently confirmed by that of his ears, for he was roused from his slumber by the noise of a wooden rattle, which was then commonly used at the death of one of the brethren. He rose and left his room, but could see no one, as it was not yet five o'clock, and the brethren were still sleeping. He then understood the meaning of the vision and foretold the death of the prior, which in reality followed a fortnight later. Taught by his own experience, he made but little account of satanic illusions and apparitions. On one occasion, when he had retired to rest, he saw at a great distance the horrible form of the devil, who seemingly intended to approach his bed. At this sight Thomas was at first filled with great fear, not knowing how to ward off this sudden attack of the infernal monster. At length he felt inspired to recite the Angelic Salutation, which he commenced with trembling voice, as is the custom with persons who are greatly alarmed. But the devil seemed not in the least affected by the prayer, and continued to advance towards Thomas, until he came to the concluding words: "Jesus. Amen." † And no sooner had he pronounced

\* Ecclus xxiv, 11. † In angello videri libello.

† Although the *Hail Mary* was thus concluded in these countries, we know from contemporary authors, such as St Bernardine of

this most holy name, than the devil, as if struck by a thunderbolt, turned round and at once took to flight. And Thomas, perceiving that the hellish foe could not withstand the power of this mighty name, boldly lifted up his head and shouted many times, "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." And the more he cried, the more the devil hurried to get away. Thomas, returning thanks to God, said to himself: "If I can so easily overcome all the assaults of the enemy by means of the most holy name of Jesus, I shall no longer fear Satan, nor, like a man of little faith, dread his threats, however terrible they may be."

Thomas relates many signs and wonders as having happened to a third person, whose name he passes over in silence, but which are commonly attributed to himself; such as the finding of a book which was lost in his cell, and other occurrences.

He is described by his contemporaries as a man of somewhat less than average height, with a brownish, high-coloured face, lit up by bright, piercing eyes, the sight of which was so good that even in extreme old age he did not need spectacles.

When he had lived seventy-one years at Mount Saint Agnes, including the time of his probation, he was called by the Lord to the mountain of eternity, which he had so often contemplated and so ardently desired; and his blessed soul, set free from the earthen vessel of the body, sped to the everlasting tabernacles, to enjoy God without end. He departed this life on the 25th day of July, in the year of our Lord 1471, aged ninety-two years.

Siena, that the addition "Holy Mary," etc., was already in use elsewhere.

# Eulogies or Praises of the Imitation of Christ

## Saint Ignatius, Founder of the Society of Jesus



HIS saint, as Orlandino relates, advised Jerome Natalis, on the occasion of his admission, to read every day a chapter from this book for his meditation, and more also if he felt prompted thereto by necessity or utility. And saying this the saint praised the work as he was wont, adding that he would find, as he himself generally did, that though opening the book at random, he would come across that which was most suitable for the occasion.—*History of the Society*, B. 5. p. 1. And the saint practised what he recommended to others. Louis Gonzales assures us that it was his custom to read every day one of the chapters of *The Imitation*, in the order in which they were written. After dinner he read another chapter, whichever he first met on opening the book; and he always found therein what best suited the actual state of his soul. And thus it came to pass that he became so familiar with *The Imitation*, that one might, ■ it were, have beheld the lessons it contained reflected in his conduct, words and actions.—*Louis Gonzales in the Life of St Ignatius*, MS. in the Professed House in Rome.

### Peter Ribadeneira

confirms this in his *Life of Saint Ignatius*, writing as follows:

“He made ■ frequent use of *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas A Kempis, and always greatly recommended its reading. He imbibed the spirit and doctrine of that book; he seized it so eagerly, and showed it so well in himself, that it seemed to many as if the solidly pious life of Ignatius was an eminent and living image of all the precepts contained in that golden book.”—B. I, ch. xiiij.

### Cardinal Baronius

Fabian Justinian, of the Congregation of the Oratory, and Bishop of Ajaccio, writes: “I think, with many persons of the highest authority, that *The Imitation of Christ* must be preferred to all other books, excepting Holy Scripture, by those who wish to lead a spiritual life. I have heard the illustrious Cardinal Baronius, who was certainly one of the most learned and pious men of our time and second to none in science and devotion, say more than once that no one who had any love for God and divine things would ever read it without spiritual profit.”—B. II.

### Cardinal Bellarmine

“*The Imitation* is ■ most useful book, and deservedly received by common consent in the Universal Church, and translated into and read in every language. I myself have, indeed, often read and

reread this work from youth to old age, and it has always seemed new to me, and even now I have a hearty relish for it."—*In his work De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis.*

### John Vendulius, Bishop of Tournai

As often as this saintly man asked his secretary to give him *The Imitation* for spiritual reading, which he did every day, he never used any other words but these: "Give me the book *par excellence!*"—*Rosweyde.*

### Louis of Granada, famous preacher, writer and master of the spiritual life, of the Order of St Dominic:

In the preface to his Spanish translation of *The Imitation* he says that he considers this book so much above its fame and praise, that when you have perused it you will be constrained to exclaim with the Queen of Saba: Thy wisdom and thy works exceed the fame which I have heard.\* "See for yourself, reader," he continues; "examine what you read, and ponder over it, and you will perceive the force of the words, you will eat the manna as the Israelites of old, and find in it every sort of taste. Here you will discover ■ a remedy for all the ills of your soul. In this book you may admire the wonderful providence of God, who in words ■■ few, yet so rich in sense, suggests so many powerful means of moving the heart of man."

And in conclusion he says: "I have had it printed in a small and handy form, that you may carry it with you, and keep it near your heart; that it may be no burden, for even when you have read it, you will not think it heavy; that you may have ■ a trusty companion ■■ the way of this life, ■ comfort in adversity, ■■ adviser and guide in doubt. From this book you will learn the art and practice of praying devoutly and the rule of a pious life, ■■ well ■■ the science of dying well and happily. Welcome it then as a friend; let it not depart from your side; when you have read it, read it again; for, believe me, its reading will not be wearisome to you, but will still please you when you shall have read it ten times; and in the same words you will ever discover something new, after the manner of the Divine Spirit, which is inexhaustible. Thankfully receive this gift, which God in His infinite goodness has bestowed, using and enjoying it for your salvation."

### Balthasar Alvarez of the Society of Jesus

Louis de Ponte records the high esteem in which this holy man held *The Imitation*, saying that he made ■ frequent use of its sentences in his exhortations, because they sink deeply into the heart, and God imprints them into the minds of those who read with good dispositions. And when he was Visitor of the Province of Aragon, he caused the use of this book to be introduced there;

\* 3 Kings x, 7.



## Praises of the Imitation of Christ xxj\*

and the good result of this soon became apparent, for the religious found that, whenever they opened it, they always met with something which suited the state of their soul.—*In the Life of Father Alvarez.*

### Julius Mignonius of the Society of Jesus

“This book seems to me to contain the very sap of the entire spiritual life, the summary of perfection, the quintessence, if I may say so, of the life and sanctity of a religious, distilled in the chemical vessel of long meditation, by a most experienced man, with the help of other spiritual books, and the unction of the Holy Ghost.” And he applies to him the words of Seneca: “What vigour he displays! what loftiness of mind! You will not find the like in all the philosophers. The writings of most of them have no other recommendation than the author’s name, the rest is lifeless; they teach, discuss, discourse, but do not give the spirit, because they have none.”\* But when you read Thomas, you will say: ‘He lives, he acts, he is free, he is above man, he fills me with the greatest confidence.’ In whatever state of mind I may be, if I read *The Imitation*, I am able to face every danger.”—*Ascetical Treatise, ch. 1, no. 15.*

### Louis Molina, a famous Theologian of the Society of Jesus

This learned and pious man never allowed himself to be prevented by his numerous occupations from reading every day a chapter of this excellent book, as may be seen from the annual letters of the year 1600, in the College of Madrid.

### The Authors of the Directory of the Society of Jesus

These had such a great esteem for *The Imitation*, that they allowed none but this book to be read by those who make the Exercises, during the first week, when all other reading is prohibited.—*Ch. 3, parag. 2.*

### The Sultan of Morocco

Henry Sommalius of the Society of Jesus, in a letter to Leonard Bettens, Abbot of Saint-Trond, writes in the following terms:

“The merit of this book, known far and wide, is clearly seen from the fact that, after the Sacred Scriptures, none has been so often reprinted, is in such general demand, none so much read by persons of every class and age, none translated into so many languages, or meeting with such universal approval. I will tell you something, which, if it did not rest on the most trustworthy evidence, would appear incredible.

“When about eighteen years ago, one of the Fathers of the Society had gone to Algiers, in Morocco, to pay the ransom of many slaves,

\* Epistola 54.

the Sultan, who had at one time been a Christian, took him to his library, which was fairly well supplied. He showed him various manuscripts, and among them was a copy of *The Imitation* translated into Arabic. And he said that he valued that work more than all his Mohammedan books."

### Berman Hugo of the Society of Jesus

"I have often heard it said by many persons, who, by their random reading of *The Imitation*, sought comfort in their sadness, that they were scarcely ever disappointed."—*Ch. 29.*

The following extracts in praise of *The Imitation* are of more recent date:

### Bernard de Fontenelle, Man of Letters, Academician, 1657=1757

"*The Imitation* is the most beautiful book ever produced by man, for the Gospel is not man's work."—*Quoted by De Lamennais.*

### John Francis de la Harpe, Author and Critic, Academician, 1739=1803

He writes as follows of himself:

"I was in my prison filled with sadness, alone, in a small room. I had read the Psalms, the Gospels and some other good books; I began to recover my faith; I saw a new light, but this light filled me with confusion, and revealed to me an abyss, forty years of error! I perceived the evil, and found no remedy. I beheld my life in the light of truth on one hand, and on the other death, that death which I daily expected, such as was then inflicted. The priest appeared no longer on the scaffold to console the victim; he only mounted to die himself. Filled with these sad thoughts, I addressed myself in mind to God, and said, 'What will become of me? What shall I do?'

"*The Imitation* lay on my table; and I had often heard that in this excellent book I would find an answer to my thoughts. I opened it at random and read: 'Behold, here I am. Behold I have come to thee, because thou hast called upon Me!' I read no more. The sudden impression which I felt is beyond description, and never to be forgotten. I prostrated myself on my face and wept. My heart was relieved and enlarged. And, when I remember this occurrence, I can but say that I never felt a more violent or more pleasing emotion, and that the words: 'Behold, here I am,' found an echo in my heart, and forcibly moved all my feelings."

### Abbe J. de Lamennais, Author and Philosopher, 1782=1854

"It has been said that *The Imitation* is a book for perfect souls; yet it is not without great utility for beginners. It is not possible to find elsewhere a deeper knowledge of man, of his contradictions,

of his weaknesses, of the most hidden movements of his heart. But the author does not stop at showing ■■ our miseries: he also points out the remedy, and makes us relish it. And this is one of the distinctive marks between him and mere moralists.”—*Preface of De Lamennais.*

A Thought from Jocelyn. By Charles Kent

FONDLY and frequently in hours of woe,  
 When grief ebbs inwards, and no tears may flow,  
 When dark affliction with its draught returns,  
 And arid sorrow in my bosom burns—  
 Then in the current of that golden book  
 Steeps my dry lip ■■ in a limpid brook;  
 That book so lofty in its lowly way,  
 A holy chalice wrought from humble clay,  
 A chalice brimming with celestial wine—  
 The 'rapt Evangel's honey-drops divine—  
 Where wisdom born of man, and God-born too,  
 Floods thro' the heart in simple words and few;  
 Where every soul adust with sin and shame,  
 Bending in sadness quaffs to quench the flame,  
 Quaffs like Gethsemane the blood that poured  
 When in the Garden groaned Creation's Lord;  
 Where every spirit, ■■ the time decrees,  
 May weep with suffering, or may smile with ease;  
 Where moral aliments abound at length,  
 The milk maternal, or the bread of strength;  
 And where beneath the awful Cross sublime,  
 The Cross on which ■ God expires for crime,  
 Man, in the tears of Christ, may drink and ■■  
 The love of God and Christ's philosophy.



# Book the First Admonitions Useful for the Spiritual Life

## CHAPTER I

### *Of Following Christ and Despising all the Vanities of the World*



**E** that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, saith the Lord. These are the words of Christ, by which we are admonished that we must imitate His life and conduct, if we would be truly

enlightened and delivered from all blindness of heart.

Let it then be our chief study to meditate on the life of Jesus Christ.

2. The teaching of Christ surpasseth all the doctrines of the saints; and he that hath the spirit of Christ will find therein the hidden manna.

It happeneth, however, that many are but little inflamed by the frequent hearing of the Gospel, because they lack the spirit of Christ.

He then who would understand the words of Christ fully and with relish, must endeavour to conform his whole life to that of Christ.

3. What doth it avail thee to discuss subtle questions concerning the Holy Trinity, if

thou lackest humility, and thus displeasest the Trinity?

Truly, eloquent words do not make a man holy and just; but a virtuous life rendereth him dear to God.

I had rather feel compunction than know its definition.

If thou knewest the whole Bible by heart and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would it all avail thee without the love of God and His grace?

*Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity*, except to love God and serve Him alone.

This is the greatest wisdom: by the contempt of the world to tend to the heavenly kingdom.

4. It is vanity, therefore, to seek perishable riches, and to hope in them.

It is also vanity to covet honours, and to aspire to a high rank.

It is vanity to indulge the lusts of the flesh, and to desire that for which grievous punishment will afterwards be inflicted.

It is vanity to desire a long life, and to take but little care of leading a good life.

It is vanity to devote our attention solely to the present life, and not to foresee what is to follow.

It is vanity to love that which passeth with all speed, and not to hasten thither where everlasting joy endureth.

Often remember the saying of the wise man

that *the eye is not filled with seeing, neither is the ear filled with hearing.*

Endeavour, therefore, to wean thy heart from the love of visible things, and turn thine attention to things invisible. For they that indulge their sensuality sully their conscience and lose the grace of God.

## CHAPTER II

### *Of a Humble Opinion of Ourselves*



VERY one naturally desireth to know; but what doth knowledge avail without the fear of God?

Better indeed is an ignorant labourer who serveth God, than a proud philosopher who, neglecting himself, contemplateth the course of the heavens.

He that knoweth himself well maketh small account of himself and findeth no delight in human praise.

If I knew everything in the world, and were not in the state of grace, what would it avail me before God, who will judge me by my works?

2. Abandon that excessive desire of knowledge, for therein lurketh much distraction and deceit.

Learned men like to be noticed and to be called wise.

There are many things which it is of little or no use to know for the good of the soul.

And he is very foolish who devoteth his attention to other things but those which are profitable to his salvation.

Many words do not fill the soul; but a good life refresheth the mind, and a pure conscience affordeth great confidence in God.

3. The more thou knowest and the better thou understandest, the more severely shalt thou be judged in consequence, unless thy life be also the holier.

Be then not puffed up with any art or science, but let the knowledge given thee rather make thee timorous.

Should it appear to thee that thou knowest many things, and understandest them full well, yet thou oughtest to perceive that there are still many more which thou knowest not.

4. *Be not high-minded*, but rather confess thine ignorance.

Why wouldst thou prefer thyself to others, whereas many surpass thee in learning and are more skilled in the Law or Scripture?

If thou wouldst profitably know or learn something, love to be unknown and to be thought of no account.

This is the most sublime and most useful subject of study, true self-knowledge and self-contempt.

To think nothing of thyself, and always



to have a good and high opinion of others is great wisdom and perfection.

If thou shouldst see another sin openly or commit some great crimes, not even then shouldst thou esteem thyself better, for thou knowest not how long thou wilt remain in a good state.

We are all weak, but thou oughtest to consider none weaker than thyself.

### CHAPTER III

#### *Of the Doctrine of Truth*



LESSED is he whom truth itself teacheth, not by figures and fleeting words, but as it is in itself.

Our own opinion and our own impression often deceive us and see but little.

What availeth a great discussion on difficult and obscure subjects, since we shall not be censured in God's judgement for not having known them?

It is great folly that, neglecting what is profitable and necessary, we readily turn our attention to curious and hurtful things. We have eyes, and see not.

2. And why need we trouble ourselves with subtle distinctions of kinds and qualities? He to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is safe from many uncertain opinions.

From one Word are all things, and all things speak one Word, and this is the Beginning which also speaketh unto us.

Without this Word no one understandeth or judgeth aright.

He to whom all things are one, who referreth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, can be steady in heart and rest peacefully in God.

O God, who art truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love!

It often wearieth me to read or hear much: in Thee is all that I wish and desire.

Let all teachers cease speaking, let all creatures be silent in Thy sight: speak Thou alone to me.

3. The more recollected and single-minded a man is, the more numerous and lofty are the truths which he knoweth without labour: for he receiveth the light of understanding from above.

Whosoever hath a pure, simple and steady mind is not easily distracted by numerous occupations, because he doeth all his works for the glory of God, and striveth to be inwardly free from all self-seeking.

What hindereth and troubleth thee more than the unruly inclination of thine own heart?

A good and pious man first disposeth inwardly the works which he hath to do outwardly.

And these outward occupations do not

move him to carnal desires, but he subjecteth them to the rule of right reason.

Who hath a stronger conflict than he that striveth to overcome himself?

And this should be our chief business: to conquer ourselves, and daily to grow stronger against ourselves and to advance somewhat in perfection.

4. In this life all perfection hath a mixture of imperfection, and all our study is not without some obscurity.

The humble knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than deep scientific research.

Not that we should find fault with science, or with every plain notion of a thing which is good in itself and ordained by God; but a good conscience and a virtuous life must ever be preferred.

Many, however, take more pains to know much than to live well, and hence they often err, and produce little or no fruit.

5. Oh! were they but as diligent in rooting out vices and planting virtues as they are in debating questions, there would not be so many evils and scandals among the people, nor so much laxity in religious houses.

Verily, when the day of judgement cometh, we shall not be asked what we have read, but what we have done; not how well we have spoken, but how piously we have lived.

Tell me, where are now all those dignita-

ries and masters whom thou well knewest whilst they lived and flourished in learning?

Others now hold their livings, and I know not whether they remember them.

In life they appeared to be something, and now they are passed over in silence.

6. Oh, how swiftly the glory of the world passeth away! Would to God their lives had been as good as their learning was great! Then, indeed, they would have well studied and taught.

How many are lost in the world by vain learning who set small store on the service of God!

And because they choose to be great rather than lowly, they become vain in their thoughts.

He is truly great who hath great charity.

He is truly great who is little in his own estimation and maketh no account of even the highest dignity.

He is truly wise who counteth all earthly things but as dung, that he may gain Christ.

And he is, indeed, well versed in learning who doeth the will of God and renounceth his own will.

## CHAPTER IV

*Of Foresight in our Actions*

E must not trust every word or impulse, but we should consider everything wisely and maturely according to God.

Alas! we are so imperfect that we often believe and speak evil of our neighbour more readily than good.

But perfect men do not easily believe every tattler, for they well know that human frailty is prone to evil and liable to err in words.

2. It is great wisdom not to be over-hasty in our actions, nor to be obstinate in our own opinion.

It also pertaineth to this wisdom, that we should not readily give credit to all that people say, nor presently whisper into the ears of others what we have heard or believed.

Seek counsel of a wise & conscientious man, and allow thyself to be guided by thy superior instead of following thine own whims.

A virtuous life rendereth a man wise according to God, and giveth him much experience.

The more humble a man is in himself and the more subject to God, so much the more judicious and undisturbed shall he be in all occurrences.

## CHAPTER V

*Of Reading the Holy Scriptures*

RUTH, not eloquence, is to be sought in Holy Scripture.

All sacred writings ought to be read in the spirit in which they were written.

In Holy Scripture we must look for that which is profitable unto salvation rather than for elegance of style.

We should as readily read pious and simple books as those that are lofty and profound.

Be not embarrassed by the consideration of the writer's qualifications, whether he was a man of great or little learning; but let love of the plain truth induce thee to read.

Ask not, Who said this? but hearken to what is said.

2. Men pass away, but *the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.*

God speaketh to us in divers ways, without respect of persons.

Our curiosity often hampereth us in reading the Scriptures, when we wish to understand and discuss that which we should simply pass over.

If thou desirest to derive some profit from thy reading, read humbly, simply and faithfully, and never with the intention of being called learned.

Inquire willingly; and listen silently to the words of the saints; and let not the parables of the ancients displease thee, for they were not spoken to no purpose.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Of Inordinate Affections*



O sooner doth a man desire something inordinately than he presently becometh troubled within himself.

The proud and avaricious are never at ease: the poor and lowly in spirit live in great peace.

A man who is not yet wholly dead to himself is easily tempted and overcome, even in small and trifling matters.

He that is still spiritually weak, and yet in some measure carnal and prone to material things, findeth it difficult to withdraw himself wholly from earthly desires.

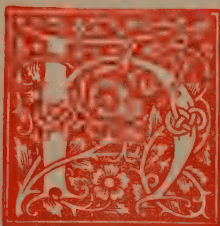
And hence he frequently experienceth sadness, when he restraineth himself from them; he becometh also easily impatient when thwarted by others.

2. But if he should obtain what he hath inordinately desired, he is presently troubled with remorse of conscience, because he hath indulged his passion, which is powerless to procure the peace he was seeking.

Accordingly, by resisting our passions we find true peace of heart, not by gratifying them. There is then no peace in the heart of a carnal man, nor of one who is given up to outward things; but only in the heart of him that is devout and spiritual.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Of Avoiding Vain Hope and Pride*



**E** is foolish that putteth his hope in man or in creatures.

Be not ashamed to serve others, and to appear poor in this world for the love of Jesus Christ.

Rely not upon thyself, but put thy trust in God.

Do what lieth in thy power, and God will favour thy good will.

Trust not in thine own wisdom, nor in the cunning of any man living; but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the lowly and humbleth the presumptuous.

Glory not in riches, if thou hast them, nor in thy friends if they are powerful; but in God, who giveth all good gifts, and desireth above all to bestow Himself.

Be not elated with thy tall form or handsome appearance, which a slight illness may disfigure and destroy.

Take no delight in thine ability or talents,



lest thou displease God, to whom thou owest all thy natural good qualities.

2. Do not esteem thyself better than others, lest perhaps thou be accounted worse in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man.

Make no show of thy good works, for the judgements of God differ from those of men; and He is often displeased with that which pleaseth men.

If there is any good in thee, think there is something better in others, that so thou mayest preserve humility.

It doth thee no harm to consider thyself inferior to all men; but it hurteth thee much to think thyself superior even to one.

Lasting peace abideth with the humble; but the hearts of the proud are often filled with jealousy and anger.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Of Shunning too much Familiarity*



**P**EN *not thy heart to every man*, but consult a wise and God-fearing person.

Have little intercourse with youths and strangers.

Do not flatter the rich when thou art in their company;

and be not anxious to appear before the grandees.

Converse with the humble and guileless, with the modest and pious; and speak of edifying subjects.

Be not familiar with any woman; but commend all good women in general to God.

Desire to be intimate only with God and His angels, and avoid the acquaintance of men.

We must have charity for all; but familiarity is not expedient.

It often happeneth that an unknown person shineth brightly by his good reputation; yet his presence darkeneth the eyes of the beholders.

We imagine sometimes that our company is pleasing to others; and we begin rather to displease them by the defects which they discover in our behaviour.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Of Obedience and Submission*



**I**t is a very great thing to abide in obedience, to live under a superior, and not to be our own master.

It is much safer to live in subjection than in authority.

Many live in obedience more through necessity than through charity; and these are distressed and easily repine.

They shall not obtain liberty of mind, un-

less they submit themselves with their whole heart for the love of God.

Run here or there, thou shalt find no rest but in humble submission under the direction of a superior.

A fancy for different places, and change of residence, hath disappointed many.

2. True it is that every one liketh to have his own way, and is more inclined to those who agree with him.

But if God be with us, it is necessary that we should sometimes give up our own opinion for the sake of peace.

Who is so wise that he can fully know all things?

Trust then not too much to thine own impression, but hear also willingly the opinion of others.

If thy judgement is right, and thou abandonest it for God's sake to follow that of another, thou shalt thence derive great profit.

3. For I have often heard that it is much safer to hear and take advice than to give it.

It may also happen that each one's opinion is good; but to refuse to yield to others, when common sense or circumstances require it, is a sign of pride and obstinacy.

## CHAPTER X

*Of Avoiding Talkativeness*

**HUN** the prattle of men as much as thou canst; for talking of worldly affairs is very hurtful to the soul, even when it is done without bad intention.

We are indeed easily tainted and ensnared by vanity.

Often I wish I had not spoken, and had not been among men.

But why do we so much like to talk and to converse together, though we seldom return to silence without having hurt our conscience?

We like to chat, because by our mutual exchange of ideas we seek consolation one from another, and we wish to relieve our hearts, which are burdened with divers thoughts.

And we think and speak most willingly of what we love or desire, or what runs counter to our inclination.

2. But, alas! herein we often labour foolishly and in vain; for this outward comfort is no small hindrance to inward and heavenly consolation.

We must then watch and pray, lest time pass away unprofitably.

When it is lawful and expedient to speak, say what is edifying.

Our bad habit and the neglect of our spiritual progress are generally the cause that we keep no guard over our tongue.

Yet a devout conference on spiritual subjects is no small help to our progress in virtue, especially when such as are of one mind and spirit meet together in the Lord.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Of Acquiring Peace, and of Zeal in Spiritual Advancement*



HE could enjoy great peace, if we refrained from interfering with the words and actions of others, which do not concern us.

How can he be long in peace who meddleth in other people's concerns, who seeketh occasions of distraction abroad, who is but little or seldom composed in mind?

Blessed are the single-minded, for they shall have abundant peace.

2. Why were some of the saints so perfect and contemplative? Because they strove to restrain themselves wholly from all earthly desires; and thus they could cling to God with their whole heart, and find time to attend to their own souls.

We, on the contrary, are too much en-

grossed with our own desires and too anxious about transitory things.

Seldom also do we fully overcome even one defect, and we are not fervent in advancing daily in virtue: hence we remain cold and indifferent.

3. If we were perfectly dead to ourselves, and not entangled inwardly with useless cares, we should then be able to relish what is divine and have some experience of heavenly contemplation.

The one great obstacle is that we are not free from passions and evil inclinations; nor do we endeavour to enter upon the perfect way of the saints.

Moreover, when we meet with a little trouble, we are at once discouraged and turn to human comfort.

4. If we strove like brave men to stand firm in battle, we should assuredly see the help of the Lord come down to us from heaven.

For He who affordeth us opportunities of fighting, so that we may conquer, is also ready to help those who strive manfully and hope in His grace.

If we imagine that our progress in perfection consisteth in outward observances only, our devotion will soon come to an end.

But let us lay the axe to the root, that, having got rid of our evil inclinations, we may possess our souls in peace.

5. If every year we rooted out but one

defect, we should soon become perfect men.

But now, on the contrary, we often perceive that we were better and purer at the beginning of our conversion than we are after many years of profession.

We ought daily to increase in zeal and in perfection; but now it is considered a great thing if a man can retain some of his first fervour.

If we did a little violence to ourselves at the outset, we should afterwards be able to do everything with ease and joy.

6. It is hard to give up old habits; it is harder still to resist our own will.

But if thou dost not now surmount small and trivial obstacles, when wilt thou be able to overcome greater difficulties?

Resist thine evil inclination in the beginning, and unlearn thy bad habit, lest perchance by degrees it bring thee into a worse plight.

Oh! didst thou but conceive what peace thou wouldst procure to thyself and what joy to others by conducting thyself well, I believe thou wouldst take thy spiritual progress more to heart.

## CHAPTER XII

*Of the Advantage of Adversity*

**T**is good for us to have sometimes troubles and difficulties, for they frequently recall a man to better sentiments by reminding him that he is in banishment and that he must not put his hope in anything here below.

It is good that we should occasionally suffer contradiction, and that others should have a bad or unfavourable opinion of us, even when we act rightly and with a good intention: these things often keep us humble, and shield us from vainglory.

For when we are outwardly despised and mistrusted by men, we feel more inclined to seek God for our inward witness.

2. Hence a man should strive to be so firmly rooted in God, that he need not go in search of any human consolation.

When a man of good will is troubled or tempted or assailed by evil thoughts, then he seeth better how much he standeth in need of God, without whom he findeth himself unable to do the least good.

Then also he mourneth, he sigheth and prayeth, by reason of the miseries he suffereth.

Then he is weary of living longer, and he wisheth death to come, that he may *be*



*dissolved and be with Christ.* Then also he well perceiveth that complete security and perfect peace cannot be lasting in this world.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *Of Resisting Temptation*



O long as we live in this world, we cannot be free from troubles and temptations.

Hence it is written in the Book of Job: *The life of man upon earth is a temptation.*

Every one, therefore, ought to be attentive to his temptations, and watch in prayer, lest the opportunity of deceiving him be seized by the devil, who never sleepeth, but *goeth about seeking whom he may devour.*

However perfect and holy a man may be, he shall sometimes have temptations, and we cannot be wholly free from them.

2. But temptations are often very profitable to man, though they may be troublesome and violent; for by them he is humbled, purified and instructed.

All the saints have passed through many tribulations and temptations, and have thereby advanced in virtue.

And they that could not endure temptation became reprobate and fell away.

There is no order so holy, nor spot so re-

tired, where temptations and adversities do not penetrate.

3. Man is not wholly secure from temptations so long as he liveth: for as we are born in concupiscence, the weakness which rendereth us liable to be tempted is within us.

When one temptation or tribulation goeth, another cometh; and we shall always have something to suffer, since we have forfeited the blessing of our original happiness.

Many seek to flee from temptations, and fall more grievously into them.

By flight alone we cannot conquer; but by patience and true humility we become stronger than all our enemies.

4. He that fleeth outwardly only, and doth not pluck up the root, shall accomplish but little; yea, temptations may return to him the sooner, and he may find himself in great trouble.

Gradually, with patience and endurance, thou shalt, with God's help, better overcome them than by thine own harshness and violence.

Often take advice in temptation, and deal not harshly with him that is tempted; but try to comfort him, as thou wouldst wish to be done to thyself.

5. The origin of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and want of confidence in God.

For as a ship without a rudder is tossed to

and fro by the waves, so a negligent man, who lightly fails in his good resolutions, is in many ways tempted.

Fire trieth iron, and temptation the just man.

We often know not what we can do, but temptation showeth us what we are.

We must, however, be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is more easily overcome if he is in no wise suffered to enter the door of the mind, but is met on the threshold at his first knock.

Hence a poet said:

Ever cope with the evil betimes:  
For too late is a remedy sought,  
When by long and by frequent delays  
Irretrievable harm hath been wrought.

For first there cometh to the mind a mere thought, then a strong impression, afterwards pleasure, evil motion and consent.

Thus by slow degrees the malicious enemy obtaineth full entrance, if we do not resist him at the outset.

And the longer a man is sluggish in resisting, the weaker also he becometh daily in himself, and the stronger the enemy groweth against him.

6. Some encounter more violent temptations at the beginning of their conversion to God, others at the end.

And, moreover, there are those who suffer almost all their life.

Some are but lightly tempted, according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which considereth the disposition and merits of each, and arrangeth all things beforehand for the salvation of the elect.

7. We must therefore not despair when we are tempted, but beseech God the more fervently, that He may vouchsafe to help us in all our distress; who undoubtedly, as Saint Paul sayeth, *will also make with temptation issue, that we may be able to bear it.*

Let us then in all temptation and tribulation humble our souls under the hand of God; for He will save the humble of spirit, and exalt them.

8. How much a man hath advanced is made manifest in temptation and affliction; and therein the greatest merit consisteth, and virtue becometh more evident.

For it is not surprising that a man should be devout and fervent when he experienceth no difficulty; but if he remaineth patient in time of tribulation, there will be hope of great progress.

Some are preserved from great assaults, and are often overcome in slight daily attacks, so that being humbled at the sight of their weakness in lesser difficulties they may never be presumptuous in greater trials.

## CHAPTER XIV

*Of Avoiding Rash Judgement*

AST thine eyes on thyself, and beware of judging the actions of others.

In judging others a man toileth uselessly, erreth frequently and sinneth easily, whereas in judging and examining himself he always laboureth with fruit.

We often judge of a thing for as much as we take it to heart, and we easily lose the faculty of judging rightly by the special liking we have for an object.

If we always kept God in view in our desires, we should not be so easily disturbed when our inclination is thwarted.

2. But often something lieth hidden within us or something affecteth us from without, which inclineth us in one direction.

Many seek themselves secretly in their actions without being aware of it.

They also seem to enjoy great peace so long as everything is done according to their wish and opinion. But should it happen otherwise than they desire, they become forthwith disturbed and sad.

By reason of a diversity of sentiments and opinions, dissensions frequently arise among friends and fellow-citizens, among religious and devout persons.

3. An old habit is not given up without difficulty, and no one liketh to be led beyond his own views.

If thou reliest more upon thy reason and diligence than upon the virtue of submission which Jesus Christ hath taught, thou wilt scarcely, if ever, become an enlightened man; for God willeth that we should be perfectly subject to Him, and that we should rise above reason by fervent charity.

## CHAPTER XV

### *Of Works done from a Motive of Charity*



OR nothing in the world, and for no man's love, is evil to be done; but for the service of our neighbour who needeth our help a good work must sometimes be freely interrupted, or also exchanged for something more useful.

And by so doing the good work is not given up, but changed into a better one.

Without charity the outward act hath no merit; but that which proceedeth from the love of God, however trifling and contemptible it may appear, becometh wholly fruitful.

For God regardeth more the greatness of the love with which a man acteth than the greatness of the act he performeth.

2. He doeth much who loveth God much.  
He doeth much who doeth a thing well.

He doeth well who worketh for the common good rather than for his own purpose.

Frequently it appeareth to be charity that moveth us, whereas it is rather sensuality; for natural inclination, self-will, hope of gain, love of ease, are seldom absent.

He that hath true and perfect charity seeketh himself in nothing, but only desireth that the glory of God may be promoted in all things.

Moreover, he envieth no one, for he doth not seek his personal pleasure or private joy; but he desireth to find happiness in God above every other good.

He attributeth no good to any creature, but referreth it all to God, from whom, from their source, all blessings flow, and in whom all the saints find at last a delightful rest.

Ah, had a man but one spark of true charity, he would indeed perceive that all earthly things are full of vanity!

## CHAPTER XVI

*Of Bearing with the Defects of Others*

HE defects which a man is unable to amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, till God may dispose otherwise. Consider that it is perhaps better thus for thy probation and for the practice of patience, without which we must not imagine that our merit will be great.

Thou must, however, pray, in case of such hindrances, that God would vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them willingly.

2. If anyone, being once or twice admonished, will not yield, do not argue with him, but commit all to God, that His will may be done, and His honour furthered in all His servants; for He well knoweth how to turn evil into good.

Learn to be patient in bearing with the various defects and imperfections of others; for thou also hast many failings which they have to endure.

If thou canst not make thyself such as thou wouldst wish to be, how wilt thou be able to mould another according to thy liking?

We should like to see others perfect, but we do not amend our own failings.

3. We want others to be sharply rebuked,



and yet we are unwilling to be censured ourselves.

We are displeas'd when too much liberty is granted to others; and yet we do not want our requests to be refused.

We desire that others should be restrained by rules; yet we can no longer bear to be checked in the least.

And hence it is evident how seldom we weigh our neighbour in the same balance as ourselves.

If all were perfect, what should we then have to suffer from others for God's sake?

But now it is the will of God that we should learn to bear one another's burdens; for no one is without defect, no one without trouble, no one sufficient for himself, no one wise enough for himself; but we must support one another, comfort one another, and likewise assist, instruct and exhort one another.

How virtuous a man is appeareth better on occasion of adversity.

For occasions do not make a man frail; but they show what he is.

## CHAPTER XVII

*Of the Religious Life*

**H**OU must learn to overcome thyself in many things, if thou wouldst maintain peace and concord with others.

It is no small matter to dwell in a monastery or congregation, to live there without blame, and to remain faithful until death.

Blessed is he that hath lived well there, and hath ended happily.

If thou wouldst duly persevere and advance in virtue, consider thyself as an exile and pilgrim on earth.

Thou must become as a fool for Christ's sake, if thou wouldst lead a religious life.

2. The habit and tonsure avail but little: a change of manners and perfect mortification of the passions make a true religious.

He that seeketh aught but God alone and the salvation of his soul, will find nothing but trouble and sorrow.

No one can remain long in peace in a congregation who doth not strive to be the least and subject to all.

3. Thou hast come to serve, not to rule; know that God called thee to suffer and to labour, not to idle and talk.

Here, therefore, men are *tried as gold in the furnace.*

Here no one can persevere, unless he will humble himself with all his heart for God's sake.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *Of the Examples of the Holy Fathers*



CONSIDER the bright examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and piety appeared; and thou wilt see how little, yea, almost nothing, it is that we do.

Alas, what is our life if compared with theirs!

The saints and friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labour and weariness, in watching and fasting, in prayer and holy meditation, in many persecutions and insults.

2. Oh, how numerous and how grievous were the sufferings endured by the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins and all others who strove to walk in the footsteps of Christ!

For they hated their life in this world, that they might keep it unto life eternal.

Oh, what strict and abject lives did the holy Fathers of the desert lead! What long and violent temptations they did endure! How often they were harassed by the

devil! What frequent and fervent prayers they offered to God! What rigorous abstinence they kept! What extraordinary zeal and earnestness they displayed for their spiritual advancement! What fierce battle they waged against their evil inclinations! With what pure and upright intention they served God!

They laboured during the day, and they passed the night mostly in devout prayer; though even while at work they did not cease from mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time profitably; every hour devoted to communing with God seemed too short.

And by reason of the great sweetness they found in contemplation, they even forgot to give to the body its needful refreshment.

They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kinsfolk; they desired to have nothing of this world; they scarcely took what was required to support life; they grudged the body even the necessary care.

Thus they were poor in earthly goods, but very rich in grace and virtue.

Outwardly they were in want, but inwardly they were refreshed with divine grace and consolation.

4. They were strangers to the world, but to God near and dear friends.

They appeared worthless to themselves and contemptible to this world; but in the

eyes of God they were valuable and beloved.

They were grounded in humility, they lived in simple obedience, they walked in love and patience; and hence they daily advanced in spirit, and found great favour with God.

They are given for an example to all religious; and they should encourage us to advance, much more than the number of the lukewarm should induce us to relax.

5. Oh, how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institute!

How great was their devotion in prayer!  
How great their zeal to excel in virtue!  
How great the regularity which they observed!

How great the reverence and obedience which they all displayed under the rule of their superior!

The traces which they have left behind them still testify that they were truly holy and perfect men, who fought so bravely that they trod the world under their feet.

But now a man is greatly esteemed if he is not a transgressor of the rule, and if he can bear patiently all that befalleth him.

Ah, the lukewarmness and carelessness of our state, that we slacken so soon in our first fervour, and grow even weary of life through indifference and sloth!

Would to God that the desire of advancing

in virtue were not wholly dead in thee, who hast so often seen many good examples of devout brethren!

## CHAPTER XIX

### *Of the Exercises of a good Religious*



THE life of a good religious should be adorned with every virtue, so that he may inwardly be such as he appeareth outwardly to men.

And by right he ought to be more virtuous within than can be observed without; for the searcher of our hearts is God, whom we must revere exceedingly, wherever we are, and in whose sight we ought to walk as pure as angels.

Every day it behoveth us to renew our good intention, and to excite ourselves to greater fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion to a spiritual life; and we should say:

O Lord God, help me in my good purpose and in Thy holy service; and grant that to-day I may begin in earnest, for what I have hitherto done is nothing.

2. According to our resolution the course of our progress shall be; and he who would advance rapidly, needeth great diligence.

For if a man who maketh a firm resolution

often faileth, how will he fare who hath seldom or never any fixed purpose?

In many ways, however, we abandon our good resolve; and a slight omission of our exercises seldom passeth without some detriment to our progress.

The good resolutions of the just depend not so much on their own wisdom ■■ on the grace of God, in whom they also ever trust in all their undertakings.

For man proposeth, but God disposeth; and *the way of a man is not his.*

3. If at times a customary exercise hath to be omitted, either for duty's sake, or for the good of our neighbour, it may afterwards easily be supplied.

But if it is lightly abandoned through distaste or negligence, the omission must be considered culpable, and will prove hurtful.

Though we do the best we can, we shall yet slightly fail in many things.

We should, however, always form a fixed resolution, especially against the faults which most of all hamper our progress.

We must diligently examine and arrange our outward as well as our inward exercises, as both are profitable for our advancement in virtue.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thyself, do so sometimes, at least once ■ day, either in the morning or in the evening.

Every morning make a good resolution; every evening examine thy conduct, con-

sidering how thou hast behaved thyself during the day in word, deed and thought; for therein thou hast perchance often offended God and thy neighbour.

Gird thyself like a man against the frauds of the devil; restrain thy gluttony, and thou shalt the more easily check all the evil inclinations of the flesh.

Never be wholly idle; but either read, or write, or pray, or meditate, or do some work for the common good.

Corporal labours, however, must be practised with discretion, and ought not to be undertaken to the same extent by all.

5. Exercises that are not prescribed for the community should not be performed publicly; for private devotions are better practised in secret.

Beware, moreover, lest thou be sluggish as regards common exercises and eager for singular practices; but if there is spare time when thou hast done entirely and faithfully all that duty and obedience demanded, do as thou pleasest, according to the promptings of thy devotion.

The same exercise is not suitable for all, but this is more fitting for one, that for another.

Moreover, divers devotions are the more pleasing, the better they are in accordance with the seasons; some are more agreeable on festivals, others on ordinary days.

Some are more needful in time of tempta-



tion, others when we enjoy peace and rest.

There are some subjects which we like to consider when we are sad, and others when we are joyful in the Lord.

6. At the time of the principal feasts, we ought to vary our pious exercises, and more fervently to implore the favour of the saints.

From one feast to another we should form our resolutions, as if we were then to depart from this world and arrive at the eternal festival.

Hence we ought carefully to prepare ourselves for holy seasons, and be more devout in our conduct, and keep all the rules more strictly, as if we were shortly to receive from God the reward of our labours.

7. And should the recompense be delayed, let us believe that we are not sufficiently prepared, and as yet unworthy of the great glory that shall be revealed in us at the appointed time; and let us endeavour to dispose ourselves better for our departure.

*Blessed is that servant, saith the Evangelist Saint Luke, whom, when his lord shall come, he shall find watching. Amen, I say to you, he shall place him over all his goods.*

## CHAPTER XX

*Of the Love of Solitude and Silence*

SEEK a convenient time for spiritual exercises in retirement, and frequently reflect on the blessings of God.

Put curious subjects aside, and read such matters as may move thee to compunction rather than feed thine imagination.

If thou wilt refrain from superfluous talking and aimless wandering, as also from hearkening to news and rumours, thou shalt find sufficient and suitable time to devote to holy meditations.

The greatest saints shunned the company of men when they could, and preferred to serve God in retirement.

2. An ancient philosopher said: As often as I have been among men, I have returned less a man.

This we often experience, when we converse much together.

It is easier to be wholly silent than not to transgress in word.

It is easier to stay at home than to be sufficiently on our guard outside.

He then who is desirous of arriving at the understanding of inward and spiritual things, must, with Jesus, go aside from the multitude.

No one appeareth safely abroad but he who liketh retirement.

No one safely speaketh but he who loveth silence.

No one safely presideth but he who is willing to be subject.

No one safely commandeth but he who hath learned well to obey.

3. No one safely rejoiceth but he who hath within him the testimony of a good conscience.

Yet the security of the saints was ever full of the fear of God; and though they excelled in many virtues and graces, they were none the less timorous and humble in themselves.

But the security of the wicked proceedeth from their pride and presumption, and turneth in the end to their own deception.

Never promise thyself security in this life, though thou seem to be a good religious or a devout hermit.

4. Men who were considered by others better than thou art have frequently been in very great peril by their overweening self-confidence.

Hence it is advantageous for many not to be wholly free from temptations, but to be often attacked, lest they think themselves too safe, or lest they be puffed up with pride, or turn aside too freely to outward comforts.

Oh, what a good conscience would he keep

who never looked for fleeting joys and never meddled with the world!

Oh, how much peace and rest would he possess who, discarding all useless cares, would devote his attention only to what is profitable and divine and place all his hope in God!

5. No one is worthy of heavenly consolation unless he hath diligently exercised himself in holy compunction.

If thou desirest that thy heart should be moved by sorrow, enter into thy chamber, and shut out the noise of the world, as it is written: *Be sorry upon your beds.* Within thy cell thou shalt find what thou often lovest without.

A cell constantly tenanted becometh sweet, but if rarely occupied it causeth weariness.

If in the beginning of thy conversion thou accustomest thyself to remain in it and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend and a delightful comfort.

6. In silence and rest a pious man maketh great progress and learneth the mysteries of the Scriptures.

There he findeth streams of tears where-with he may every night wash and cleanse himself, that he may become so much the better acquainted with the Creator as he is farther removed from the tumult of the world.

Thus God with His holy angels will draw

near to Him who withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends.

It is better for a man to lead a hidden life and take care of his soul than to neglect himself and work miracles in public.

It is commendable for a religious to go out but seldom, to avoid being seen, and not to wish to see outsiders.

7. Why wilt thou see what thou must not have? *The world passeth away and the concupiscence thereof.*

The cravings of sensuality urge thee to roam abroad; and when the hour is passed what bringest thou home with thee but a burdened conscience and a distracted heart?

A cheerful departure often begetteth a sad return, and a merry evening frequently causeth a sorrowful morning.

Thus all carnal joys enter pleasantly, but in the end they bite and kill.

What canst thou see elsewhere that thou dost not see here? Behold the heavens and the earth and all the elements out of which all things are made.

8. What canst thou see anywhere that lasteth long under the sun?

Thou thinkest perhaps that by seeing and hearing much thou wilt be satiated, but to this thou canst not attain.

Couldst thou behold all earthly things present before thee, what would it be but a vain show?

Lift up thine eyes to God on high, and ask pardon for thy sins and negligences.

Leave vain things to vain people, but attend thou to what God hath commanded thee.

Shut thy door behind thee, and call unto thee Jesus, thy beloved.

Stay with Him in thy cell, for elsewhere thou shalt not find the like peace.

Hadst thou not gone out and hearkened to idle reports, thou shouldst have continued to enjoy greater rest.

But ~~as~~ thou art pleased at times to listen to gossip, thou hast rightly to endure trouble of heart in consequence.

## CHAPTER XXI

### *Of Compunction of Heart*



**I**f thou wouldst make some progress in virtue, keep thyself in the fear of God and do not seek too much liberty; but restrain all thy senses under discipline and do not abandon thyself to foolish mirth.

Give thyself to compunction of heart, and thou shalt find true devotion.

Compunction revealeth many treasures, which dissipation is wont speedily to lose.

It is surprising that a man can ever give himself up wholly to joy in this life, if he

reflecteth and meditateth on his banishment and on the many dangers to which his soul is exposed.

2. Owing to our frivolity of heart and our neglect in correcting our faults, we do not perceive the disorders of our soul; indeed, we often vainly laugh when we have good reason to weep.

There is no true liberty nor perfect joy but in the fear of God with a good conscience. Happy is he who can cast off all hindrance of distraction, and compose himself in retirement for holy compunction.

Happy is he who renounceth all that can stain or burden his conscience.

Fight manfully; one habit is overcome by another.

If thou canst leave others alone, they will also suffer thee to do thy work in peace.

3. Do not meddle with the affairs of others, and do not interfere with the business of thy superiors.

Always keep an eye on thyself in the first place, and take special care to admonish thyself before all those that are dear to thee.

If thou dost not enjoy the favour of men, grieve not for this; but be sorry because thou dost not conduct thyself so well and so prudently as becometh a servant of God and a devout religious.

It is often better and safer for a man not to have many comforts in this life, especially according to the flesh.

But it is our own fault that we are deprived of divine consolations, or taste them but seldom; because we do not seek compunction of heart, nor do we thoroughly renounce vain and outward comforts.

4. Acknowledge that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and rather deserving much tribulation.

When a man is perfectly moved to compunction, the whole world becometh burdensome and bitter to him.

A pious man findeth sufficient cause for mourning and weeping.

For whether he observeth himself or considereth his neighbour, he knoweth that no one liveth here without suffering.

And the more closely he examineth himself, the more he grieveth.

The motives of just sorrow and inward mourning are our sins and defects, in which we lie so entangled that we are but seldom able to contemplate heavenly things.

5. Didst thou but oftener think of thy death than of a long life, thou wouldst undoubtedly amend thyself with greater zeal.

If thou wouldst also ponder over the future pains of hell or purgatory in thy heart, I believe thou wouldst willingly undergo labour and sorrow and fear no austerity.

But as we do not take these truths to heart and we still love what flattereth the senses, it followeth that we remain very cold and dull in the service of God.



6. It is often the want of the right spirit that causeth the wretched body to complain so lightly.

Pray therefore humbly to the Lord that He would grant thee the spirit of compunction, and say with the Prophet David: *Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me for my drink tears in measure.*

## CHAPTER XXII

### *Of the Consideration of Human Misery*



**T**HOU art miserable, wherever thou mayest be, and in whatever direction thou mayest move, unless thou turnest to God.

Why art thou troubled if thou art not so successful as thou wishest and desirest?

Who is there that hath all things according to his will? Neither I, nor thou, nor any one upon earth.

There is no one in the world without some trouble or anxiety, though he be King or Pope.

Who then is best at ease? Undoubtedly he who can suffer something for God's sake.

2. Many infirm and weak persons say: Behold what a happy life such a man leadeth; how rich, how great, how mighty and exalted he is?

But consider the riches of heaven, and thou shalt perceive that all these temporal goods are of no value; they are very uncertain, and rather burdensome: for they are never possessed without anxiety and fear.

Man's happiness consisteth not in having temporal goods in abundance, but a small portion is sufficient for him.

It is truly a misery to live upon earth.

The more spiritual a man wisheth to be, the more bitter also this life becometh to him; because he feeleth more keenly and seeth more clearly the defects of human corruption.

For to eat and drink, to watch and sleep, to rest and work, and to be subject to all the other necessities of nature, is indeed a great misery and trouble to a devout man, who would like to be disengaged and free from all sin.

3. For the inward man is much burdened in this world by the needs of the body.

Whence the prophet David devoutly prayeth to be freed from them, saying: *O Lord, deliver me from my necessities.*

But woe to them that do not know their misery! And more woe to them that love this wretched and corruptible life!

For some are so fond of it, though they can scarcely procure the necessaries of life by working or begging, that, if they could live here for ever, they would not concern themselves with the kingdom of God.

4. Oh, the foolish and faithless of heart, who lie so deeply sunk in earthly things that they can relish nothing but what is carnal!

Yet in the end these wretches shall be constrained to acknowledge how contemptible and worthless was all they loved.

The saints of God, on the contrary, and all the devout friends of Christ, heeded not what pleased the flesh, nor what flourished here below; but the eternal reward was the only object of their hope and thought.

All their desires tended upwards, to lasting and invisible goods, lest the love of visible things might drag them down to earth.

5. O my brother, despair not of thy spiritual progress: thou hast yet time, the hour is thine.

Why wilt thou defer thy good purpose? Arise, and begin at once, and say: Now is the time to do, now is the time to fight, now is the suitable time to amend my life.

When it goeth ill with thee, and thou art troubled, then is the time to merit.

Thou must needs pass through fire and water before coming into a refreshment.

Unless thou doest violence to thyself, thou shalt not conquer vice.

So long as we are in this frail body, we cannot be without sin, nor live without weariness and suffering.

We would fain be free from all misery; but ~~as~~ we have lost our innocence by sin, we have also forfeited true happiness.

We must therefore be patient, and wait for God's mercy, until this iniquity pass away, and that which is mortal be swallowed up by life.

6. Oh, how great is human frailty, which is always prone to evil!

To-day thou confessest thy sins, and to-morrow thou again committest the sins thou hast confessed.

Now thou resolvest to beware of some fault, and within an hour thou fallest into it, as if thou hadst made no resolution.

Rightly, therefore, should we humble ourselves, and beware of ever entertaining a good opinion of ourselves, since we are so weak and fickle.

We may also easily lose through carelessness what by God's grace we have at length obtained with difficulty and much labour.

7. What will yet become of us in the end, who grow faint-hearted at so early an hour?

Woe to us if we would thus lie down to rest, as if we were already in peace and security, whereas no sign of true sanctity appeareth as yet in our conduct!

It were indeed needful for us to be trained anew in a better mode of life, like good novices, if haply there be some hope of future amendment, and greater progress in virtue.

## CHAPTER XXIII

*Of the Consideration of Death*

**T** will very soon be all over with thee in this world; see then how matters stand with thee; to-day a man is here, to-morrow he shall not be found.

And when he is out of sight, he is also quickly out of mind.

Oh, the dullness and blindness of man's heart, which considereth only the present, and doth not rather look forward to the future!

In all thy works and thoughts thou oughtest to proceed as if to-day thou wert to die.

If thou hadst a good conscience, thou wouldst not greatly fear death.

It were better to beware of sin than to flee from death.

If thou art not prepared to-day, how wilt thou be to-morrow?

The morrow is uncertain; and dost thou know whether thou shalt have a morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we improve so little?

Ah, a long life doth not always mend us, but often rather increaseth our guilt.

Would to God we had spent one day well in this world!

Many count the years of their conversion,

but the fruit of their amendment is often inconsiderable.

If it is dreadful to die, it will perhaps be more dangerous to live longer.

Blessed is he who hath the hour of his death constantly before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself to die.

If thou hast ever seen a man die, remember that thou shalt also go the same way.

3. When it is morning, think that thou shalt not live till night.

And when evening hath come, venture not to promise thyself the next morning.

Be, therefore, always ready; and live so that death may never find thee unprepared.

Many die suddenly and unexpectedly; for at the unexpected hour the Son of Man will come.

When that last hour cometh, thou wilt begin to think very differently of all thy past life, and thou wilt grieve exceedingly for having been so heedless and sluggish.

4. Oh, how happy and wise is he who now in life striveth to be such as he would fain be found in death!

For a perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to advance in virtue, the love of restraint, the practice of penance, prompt obedience, self-denial and the patient endurance of every adversity for Christ's sake, will afford great confidence of dying happily.

Whilst thou art in health, thou canst do

much good; but I know not what thou wilt be able to do when ailing.

There are few who mend their ways in sickness, just as those who go much on pilgrimage seldom become holy.

5. Depend not on thy friends and kindred, nor delay the work of thy salvation till some future time; for people will forget thee sooner than thou thinkest.

It is better now betimes to act with foresight, and to send some good works forward, than to trust in the help of others.

If thou dost not attend to thyself now, who will concern himself with thee later?

Now time is very precious, *now is the day of salvation, now is the acceptable time.*

But alas that thou dost not make a better use of this time, during which thou canst merit to live eternally!

The time is at hand, when thou shalt desire one day or one hour to amend thy life, and I know not if thou wilt obtain it.

6. Behold, then, O beloved, what great danger thou canst shun, what great terror thou canst escape, if now thou art ever devout and mindful of death.

Endeavour now to live in such a manner that at the hour of death thou mayest experience joy rather than fear.

Learn now to die to the world, that then thou mayest begin to live with Christ.

Learn now to despise all things, that then thou mayest freely go to Christ.

Chastise now thy body by penance, that then thou mayest have a sure confidence.

7. Ah, foolish man, why dost thou think to live long, when thou art not sure of a single day?

How many have been deceived and unexpectedly taken hence?

How often hast thou heard it said that such a man was slain by the sword, such another was drowned, this one falling from a height broke his neck, that one dropped dead whilst eating, and another again met his death when playing?

One perished by fire, another by the sword, a third by the pest, a fourth by war; and thus death is the end of all, and the life of man passeth away swiftly, like a shadow.

8. Who will remember thee after death, and who will pray for thee?

Do now, my dear brother, do even now all the good thou canst; for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor what will befall thee after death.

Whilst thou hast time, gather for thyself everlasting riches.

Think of nothing but thy salvation; care for nothing but things divine.

Make now friends to thyself by honouring the saints of God and imitating their virtues; that when life faileth thee *they may receive thee into everlasting dwellings.*

9. Keep thyself here on earth as a pilgrim



and a stranger who is in no wise concerned with worldly affairs.

Keep thy heart free and lifted up to God on high, for thou hast not here a lasting city. To heaven thou must direct with tears thy daily prayers and sighs, that at death thy spirit may be worthy to pass away happily to the Lord. Amen.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### *Of Judgement and the Punishment of Sins*



**I**N all things look to the end, and how thou shalt stand before the severe Judge, from whom nothing is hidden; who is not appeased with gifts and admitteth no excuse, but will judge what is just.

O wretched and foolish sinner, what wilt thou answer to God, who knoweth all thine iniquities, thou who sometimes fearest the countenance of an angry man.

Why dost thou not provide for thyself beforehand against the day of judgement, when it will not be possible for any man to be excused or defended by another, but every one will be a sufficient burden to himself?

Now thy labour is meritorious, thy tears are acceptable, thy groans may be favourably heard; now thou canst give satisfaction

and be cleansed by thy sorrow.

2. A great and salutary purgatory falleth here to the lot of a patient man, who, when he receiveth injuries, grieveth more for the malice of the offender than for the wrong done to himself; who willingly prayeth for them that thwart him, and forgiveth their offences from his heart; who delayeth not to ask pardon of others; who is sooner moved to pity than to anger; who often doeth violence to himself, and striveth to subject the flesh wholly to the spirit.

It is better to cleanse ourselves of our sins, and to root out our defects now, than to reserve them to be purged hereafter.

Verily we deceive ourselves through our inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What else will that fire devour but thy sins?

The more thou sparest thyself now and indulgest the flesh, so much the more rigorously shalt thou have to atone hereafter; and thou storest up more fuel for burning.

In what things a man hath sinned most, in the same shall he be most grievously punished. There the slothful shall be urged on with burning goads, and the gluttons shall be tormented with extreme hunger and thirst.

There the voluptuous and the lovers of sensual pleasures shall be drenched with pitch and stinking brimstone; and the envious, like mad dogs, shall howl with pain.

4. There no vice shall be without its own peculiar torment.

There the proud shall be filled with all confusion; and the misers shall be reduced to the direst want.

There one hour of suffering shall be harder to bear than a hundred years of the severest penance here.

There no rest, no consolation shall be afforded to the damned; whereas in this world we may sometimes interrupt our labours and enjoy the consolation of our friends.

Take heed now, and grieve for thy sins, that in the day of judgement thou mayest be secure with the blessed.

*For then shall the just stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them and that have oppressed them.*

Then shall He sit in judgement, who now humbly submitteth Himself to the judgement of men.

Then shall the poor and humble have great confidence, and the proud shall stand abashed on every side.

5. Then it shall be seen that he was wise in this world who for Christ's sake learned to be foolish and despised.

Then every affliction borne with patience shall give pleasure, and *all iniquity shall stop its mouth.*

Then shall all devout men be glad, and the godless shall mourn.

Then shall the body that hath suffered for

the love of God rejoice more than if it had always been fostered in delights.

Then shall the poor habit be resplendent with glory, and the bright dress of worldlings shall appear dull.

Then a poor cottage shall be praised more than a gilded palace.

Then shall constant patience avail more than all the power of the world.

Then simple obedience shall be exalted more than all earthly cunning.

6. Then shall a clean and good conscience gladden more than subtle philosophy.

Then shall the contempt of riches weigh more than all the treasures of the earth-born.

Then thou shalt be comforted more by having prayed devoutly than by having feasted daintily.

Then thou shalt rejoice more for having observed silence than for having held long conversations.

Then shall good deeds be worth more than many fair words.

Then shall a strict life and severe penance afford more pleasure than all earthly delights.

Learn, therefore, to bear lesser sufferings now, that then thou mayest be delivered from greater pains.

Here first try what thou wilt be able to endure hereafter.

If now thou canst not bear anything, how

will it be possible for thee to support eternal torments?

If now a trifling pain rendereth thee so impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter?

Behold! thou canst indeed not have both joys: here to delight in the world, and hereafter to reign with Christ.

7. If until this day thou hadst always lived in honours and pleasures, what would it all avail thee if at this moment thou wert to die?

All therefore is vanity, except to love God, and to serve Him alone.

For he that loveth God with all his heart feareth neither death, nor punishment, nor judgement, nor hell; because perfect love secureth free access to God.

But if a man still delighteth in sin, no wonder he dreadeth death and judgement.

However, it is well that if the love of God withhold thee not from evil, at least the fear of hell should keep thee in restraint.

As to him who layeth aside the fear of God, he cannot be steadfast in virtue, but will speedily fall into the snares of the devil.

## CHAPTER XXV

*Of the Fervent Amendment of our whole Life*

**E** watchful and diligent in the service of God, and frequently consider why thou didst leave the world and become a religious.

Was it not that thou mightest live for God and become a spiritual man?

Be zealous then to advance in virtue, for ere long thou shalt receive the reward of thy labours, and then fear and sorrow shall be no longer within thy borders.

Thou shalt now labour a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea, everlasting joy.

If thou remainest constant and fervent in doing good, God will, without doubt, also be faithful and generous in rewarding thee.

Thou must entertain a good hope of obtaining the palm of victory; but thou oughtest not to be self-confident, lest thou become slothful or proud.

2. As one who was full of anxiety often wavered between hope and fear, and on a certain occasion, being overwhelmed with sadness, prostrated himself in prayer before an altar in the church, he considered these things within himself, saying: "Oh, did I but know that I shall persevere to the end!" And presently he heard within himself this divine reply: "What wouldst thou do if thou

knewest this? do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be quite safe.”

And thereupon, being comforted and strengthened, he committed himself to the will of God, and his anxious wavering ceased.

Nor would he afterwards curiously inquire what should befall him, but he rather strove to discover what was *the acceptable and the perfect will of God*, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. *Trust in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet David, and dwell in the land, and thou shalt be fed with its riches.*

One cause which keepeth many back from progress and fervent amendment, is the dread of the difficulty or fatigue of the struggle.

Yet they indeed advance more than others in virtue, who make a greater effort to overcome what is most difficult and contrary to them.

For the more a man overcometh himself and mortifieth himself in spirit, the greater progress he shall also make, and the greater grace he shall merit.

4. But one man hath not as much to overcome and mortify as another.

Yet one who hath many passions, but stri-  
veth zealously to overcome them, will make more progress than another who is more composed but less fervent in the pursuit of virtue.

Two things are especially helpful for a

great amendment of life, namely, a forcible withdrawal from that to which nature is viciously inclined, and a fervent effort to acquire the virtue which is most needed.

Endeavour likewise to avoid and overcome more especially what displeaseth thee more frequently in others.

5. Seize the opportunity of improving thyself, wherever thou art; and if thou hearest or seest good examples, rouse thyself to imitate them.

But shouldst thou observe something wrong, beware of doing the like; and if thou hast ever done it, try to make amends without delay.

As thine eye beholdeth others, so art thou also observed by them.

Oh, how delightful and sweet it is to see fervent and devout brethren, obliging and well behaved!

And how sad and painful it is to behold religious leading a careless life, and not complying with the duties of their calling!

Oh, how hurtful it is to neglect the object of our vocation, and to devote our attention to things which do not concern us!

6. Be mindful of thy first purpose, and keep before thee the image of the Crucified.

Well mayest thou blush when thou considerest the life of Jesus Christ, because thou hast not yet endeavoured to conform thyself more to Him, though thou hast so long walked in the way of God.



A religious who meditateth attentively and devoutly on the most holy Life and Passion of our Lord shall find there in abundance all that is profitable and necessary for him, and he needeth not look for anything better besides Jesus.

Oh, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and suitably we should be taught!

7. A fervent religious beareth and understandeth rightly all that he is told.

A careless and tepid religious hath trouble upon trouble, and suffereth vexation on every side; for he lacketh inward consolation, and is prevented from seeking outward comfort.

A religious whose conduct is at variance with the regular observance is in great danger of falling into mortal sin.

He that seeketh liberty and ease shall always be in trouble, for something or other will displease him.

8. How do so many other religious act who lead a very strict life according to the rule of their order?

They seldom go out, they live in retirement, their diet is frugal, their habit is coarse, they work much and talk little, they watch late and rise early, they pray much and read often, and they keep themselves in great restraint.

Look at the Carthusians, the Cistercians, and the monks and nuns of various orders,

how they rise nightly to praise the Lord.

And therefore it would be unseemly for thee to be sluggish at so holy a work, when such a multitude of religious begin to chant joyfully to God.

9. Oh, that we had nothing else to do but to praise the Lord our God with all our heart and tongue!

Oh, that thou hadst never to eat, or drink, or sleep; but mightest always pay homage to God, and occupy thyself solely with spiritual things!

Then thou shouldst be much happier than now, when thou must needs attend to all thy temporal wants.

Would to God there were no such corporal necessities, but only the spiritual refreshments of the soul, which, alas! we taste but too seldom.

10. When a man hath advanced so far that he seeketh no consolation from any creature, then doth God begin to be wholly delightful to him; then also will he be well content, no matter what may occur.

Then he will neither rejoice at a gain, nor grieve at a loss; but he resteth wholly and confidently in God, who is to him all in all; to whom indeed nothing perisheth or dieth; but all things live unto Him and do His bidding without delay.

11. Ever remember the end thou hast in view, and that time once lost returneth no more.

Without care and diligence no virtue can be acquired.

If thou becomest lukewarm, thou shalt begin to feel ill at ease.

But if thou rousest thyself to fervour, thou shalt find great peace, and thy labour shall seem lighter, by the grace of God, and the love of virtue.

A fervent and diligent man is ready for all things.

It is more laborious to strive against our vices and passions, than to toil in corporal occupations.

He that doth not avoid small imperfections, gradually falleth into greater faults.

Thou wilt always rejoice in the evening, if thou spendest the day profitably.

Watch over thyself, rouse thyself, admonish thyself; and whatever may be the case with others, do not neglect thyself.

In proportion as thou doest violence to thyself, thou shalt advance in perfection.

Amen.



# Book the Second

## Admonitions inducing to the Inner Life

### CHAPTER I

#### *Of Inward Intercourse*



THE *kingdom of God is within you*, saith the Lord.

Be converted to the Lord with all thy heart, and forsake this wretched world, and thy soul shall find rest.

Learn to despise exterior and apply thyself to interior things; and thou shalt see the kingdom of God come upon thee.

*For the kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*, which is not given to the wicked.

Christ will come to thee imparting to thee His consolation, if thou wilt prepare a worthy dwelling for Him in thy heart.

All His glory and beauty is within, and there He taketh His delight.

To the inward man He vouchsafeth frequent visits, sweet converse, delightful comfort, plentiful peace, and a most amazing intimacy.

2. Prepare thy heart then, O faithful soul, for this thy Spouse, that He may deign to come to thee, and to dwell in thee.

For thus He speaketh: *If anyone love Me, he*

*will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him.*

Make room then for Christ in thy heart, and deny entrance to all others.

When thou hast Christ, thou art rich and hast enough. He will provide for thee, and faithfully attend to all thy wants, so that thou shalt not need to trust in men.

For men soon change, and quickly fail; but *Christ abideth for ever*, and assisteth us faithfully to the end.

3. No great trust is to be put in a frail and mortal man, though he be useful and dear to thee; nor oughtest thou to be much grieved if at times he should oppose and contradict thee.

They that are with thee to-day may turn against thee to-morrow; and also the reverse: men often veer with the wind.

Put all thy confidence in God, and let Him be thy fear and thy love. He will answer for thee, and will kindly do all for the best.

Thou hast not here a lasting city, and wherever thou mayest be thou art a stranger and a pilgrim; nor shalt thou ever find rest, unless thou art closely united to Christ.

4. Why dost thou anxiously look around thee here, whereas this is not thy final resting-place?

In heaven thy home should be; and thou

shouldst view all earthly things as if thou wert on a journey.

All things pass away, and thou too passest with them.

See thou cling not to them, lest thou be caught and perish.

Let thy thought be with the Most High, and thy prayer unceasingly to Christ ascend.

If thou canst not meditate on lofty and heavenly subjects, dwell on Christ's Passion, and willingly abide in His sacred wounds.

For if thou hast recourse to the wounds and precious marks of Jesus with devotion, thou shalt feel great comfort in tribulation; and thou shalt not much resent the slights of men, but easily put up with slanderous words.

5. Christ was also despised by men in this world, and in His greatest need He was forsaken by His acquaintance and friends in the midst of insults.

Christ would suffer and be despised; and shouldst thou dare to complain of any one?

Christ had adversaries and blasphemers, and dost thou expect to have all men for thy friends and benefactors?

How can thy patience be crowned if no trouble befall thee?

If thou wilt suffer no adversity, how canst thou be a friend of Christ?

Suffer patiently with Christ and for Christ, if thou wouldst reign with Christ.

6. If once thou hadst perfectly entered into the sentiments of Jesus, and tasted a little of His ardent love, thou wouldst not heed thine own convenience or inconvenience, but rather rejoice when thou art treated with contempt; for the love of Jesus maketh a man despise himself.

A lover of Jesus and of the truth, a truly spiritual man who is disengaged from all inordinate affections, can freely turn to God, and raise himself from earthly to heavenly things, and find therein his delight.

7. He that esteemeth all things as they are, and not as they are said or thought to be, is wise indeed, and taught by God rather than by man.

He that knoweth how to lead an inner life, and to make small account of outward things, requireth no particular place, and awaiteth no special time for his exercises of devotion.

An inward man can quickly recollect himself, because he is never wholly given up to outward things.

He is not hindered by active work nor by any occupation which keepeth him temporarily engaged; but he adapteth himself to all things as they occur.

He that is well disposed and ordered within heedeth not the strange and perverse doings of men.

For as much as a man meddleth with outward things, he is hindered and distracted.



8. If thou wert upright, and cleansed of thine inordinate affections, all would tend to thy good and to thy progress.

Many things often displease and trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead to thyself, nor disengaged from all earthly things.

Nothing defileth and entangleth the heart of **man** more than the impure love of creatures.

If thou refuseth outward comfort, thou shalt be able to contemplate heavenly things, and often rejoice exceedingly in spirit.

## CHAPTER II

### *Of Humble Submission*



**EED** not much who is for or against thee, but try and see that God be with thee in all thou doest.

Have a good conscience, and God will assuredly defend thee.

For whom God will help, no man's malice can hurt.

If thou canst be silent and suffer, thou shalt undoubtedly experience the help of the Lord.

He knoweth the time and the manner of saving thee, and therefore thou must commit thyself to Him.

*It belongeth to God both to help and to deliver from all confusion.*

It is often very good for us that others should know our failings and rebuke us, that so we may the better remain humble.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, he easily pacifieth others, and satisfieth without difficulty those who are angry with him.

God protecteth and delivereth the humble; He loveth and comforteth the humble; He inclineth Himself towards the humble; He giveth great grace to the humble; and after their abasement He raiseth them up to glory.

To the humble He revealeth His secrets, and sweetly attracteth and inviteth them to Himself.

An humble man is well content when he is put to confusion, because he relieth upon God, and not upon the world.

Do not imagine that thou hast made any progress, unless thou deemest thyself the least of all.

## CHAPTER III

*Of a Good Peaceable Man*

FIRST, keep thyself in peace, and then thou wilt be able to pacify others.

A peaceable man doth more good than a great scholar.

A passionate man taketh amiss even what is good, and readily giveth credit to evil.

A good peaceable man taketh all in good part.

He that is well contented, suspecteth no one.

But he that is discontented and disturbed in heart is troubled with divers suspicions; he doth not enjoy peace himself, nor doth he leave others in peace.

He often sayeth what he ought not to say, and leaveth undone what it would be better for him to do.

He observeth what others must do, and neglecteth what he hath to do himself.

Therefore display thy zeal in thine own behalf first, but afterwards thou shalt properly exert thyself in behalf of thy neighbour.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse and colour thine own deeds, but thou wilt not accept the excuses of others.

It were fairer that thou shouldst accuse thyself, and excuse thy brother.

If thou wouldst be borne with, bear also with another.

Behold how far thou art as yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry or indignant but with itself.

It is no great matter to associate with the good and gentle, for this is naturally pleasing to all; and every one liketh to have peace, and much preferreth those who agree with him.

But to be able to live peaceably with uncouth, malicious or uneducated men, or with those that thwart us, is a great grace, and a most praiseworthy and manly achievement.

3. There are some who keep themselves in peace, and are in peace also with others.

And some enjoy no peace themselves, nor do they leave others in peace; they are troublesome to others, but always more troublesome to themselves.

And there are some who persevere in peace; and endeavour to bring others back to peace.

Yet all our peace in this miserable life must be sought in humble forbearance rather than in meeting with no opposition.

He who best knoweth how to suffer will enjoy the greatest peace. Such a man is conqueror of himself and lord of the world, the friend of Christ and an heir of heaven.

## CHAPTER IV

*Of a Pure Mind and an Upright Intention*

**Y** two wings a man is lifted up from earthly things, namely, by simplicity and purity.

Simplicity must be in the intention, purity in the affection.

Simplicity aimeth at God, purity understandeth and tasteth Him.

No good action will hamper thee, if thou art inwardly free from inordinate affection.

If thou desirest and seekest nothing but the good pleasure of God and the advantage of thy neighbour, thou shalt enjoy inward liberty.

If thy heart were upright, every creature would be unto thee a mirror of life and a book of holy doctrine.

There is no creature, however small and contemptible, which doth not reflect the goodness of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, thou wouldst look at all things without hindrance, and understand them properly.

A pure heart penetrateth heaven and hell.

As a man is disposed inwardly, so he judgeth outwardly.

If there is joy in the world, the man who is pure of heart undoubtedly possesseth it.

And if there is anywhere trouble and an-

guish, he that hath a bad conscience knoweth it best.

As iron put into the fire loseth the rust and becometh all bright, so he that turneth himself wholly to God is freed from his sluggishness and changed into a new man.

3. When a man beginneth to lose his fervour, he dreadeth a little labour, and willingly receiveth outward comfort.

But when he beginneth perfectly to overcome himself, and to walk manfully in the way of God, then he counteth as mere trifles what previously appeared to him great difficulties.

## CHAPTER V

### *Of Attending to our own Selves*



E must not trust too much to ourselves, because we often lack grace and understanding.

There is but little light in us, and this we easily lose by our negligence.

Frequently also we do not perceive how blind we are inwardly.

We often do wrong, and we do worse by excusing ourselves.

Sometimes we are moved by passion, and we imagine it is zeal.

We blame little failings in others, and overlook greater faults in ourselves.

We are very quick in perceiving and considering what we have to suffer from others, but we do not heed what others have to suffer from us.

He that duly and rightly considereth his own defects will have no occasion to judge harshly of others.

2. A spiritual man putteth the care of himself before all other cares; and he that diligently watcheth over himself will readily be silent concerning others.

Never shalt thou be an inward and devout man, unless thou cease speaking of the actions of others and take particular notice of thyself.

If thou turnest thine attention wholly to God and thyself, what thou seest and hearest outwardly will not trouble thee much.

Where art thou when thou art not self-conscious? And when thou hast surveyed all things in thy mind, and forgotten thyself, what hast thou gained?

If thou desirest peace and true union of heart with God, thou must set aside all the rest and keep only thyself before thine eyes.

3. Hence thou shalt make great progress, if thou wilt hold aloof from all temporal care. Thou shalt suffer great loss, if thou settest much value on anything temporal.

Esteem nothing great, lofty, pleasing or acceptable but God and godly things.

Consider all comfort vain which cometh from any creature.

A soul that loveth God disregardeth all but God.

God alone is eternal and infinite, filling all things, the comfort of the soul and the true joy of the heart.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Of the Joy of a Good Conscience*



THE glory of a good man is the testimony of a good conscience.

Have a good conscience, and thou shalt always rejoice.

A good conscience can bear very much, and is very

cheerful in adversity.

A bad conscience is always afraid and uneasy.

Sweetly shalt thou repose, if thy heart doth not reprehend thee.

Rejoice not, except when thou hast done well.

The wicked never experience true joy, nor do they feel inward peace; for *there is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord.*

And if they say, We are in peace, no evil shall befall us; and who will dare to hurt us? believe them not; for the wrath of God will suddenly arise, and their deeds shall be brought to nought, and *their thoughts shall perish.*

2. To glory in tribulation is not hard to him



that loveth; for so to glory is *to glory in the Cross of our Lord.*

Short-lived is the glory which is given and taken by men.

Sorrow always followeth in the wake of earthly glory.

The glory of the good is in a pure conscience, and not in the tongues of men.

The gladness of the just is of God, and in God, and they rejoyce in the truth.

He that desireth true and everlasting glory careth not for temporal glory.

And he that seeketh temporal glory, or doth not despise it from his heart, sheweth that he hath but scant love for the glory of heaven.

He enjoyeth great tranquillity of heart who heedeth neither praise nor blame.

3. He that hath a clean conscience is easily content and tranquil.

Thou art neither more righteous when praised, nor more wicked when blamed.

Thou art what thou art, and it cannot be said that thou art greater than thou art in God's sight.

If thou considerest what thou art within thyself, thou wilt not heed what men say of thee.

Man looketh at the face, but *God beholdeth the heart.*

Man considereth the work, but God judgeth of the intention.

Always to act well and yet to think little

of oneself is the mark of an humble soul. To seek no consolation from any creature is a sign of great purity of heart and inward confidence in God.

4. He that requireth no testimony on his behalf from without hath evidently committed himself wholly to God.

*For not he who commendeth himself is approved, saith Saint Paul, but he whom God commendeth.*

To walk with God inwardly and not to be fettered by any attachment outwardly is the state of an interior man.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Of the Love of Jesus above all things*



**LESSED** is he that understandeth what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for Jesus' sake.

Thou must renounce love for love, because Jesus will be loved alone above all

things.

The love of the creature is deceitful and inconstant; the love of Jesus is faithful and enduring.

He that cleaveth to the creature shall fall with the frail; he that embraceth Jesus shall stand firm for ever.

Love Him and keep Him for thy friend

who, when all others retire, will not forsake thee nor suffer thee to perish in the end.

Some day thou must be separated from all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep close to Jesus in life and in death, and commit thyself to His keeping, who alone can help thee when all others fail.

Thy Beloved is of such a nature, that He will admit of no rival; but He alone will have thy heart, and sit as King on His own throne.

Didst thou but know how to rid thyself of all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee.

Thou shalt find almost all thy hope and comfort lost, if thou placest them in anyone but Jesus.

Do not depend, nor lean upon a reed shaken with the wind; for *all flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof shall fall as the flower of the field.*

3. Thou shalt easily be deceived if thou considerest only the outward appearance of men.

And if thou seekest thy comfort and advantage in others but Jesus, thou shalt very often suffer loss.

If in all things thou seekest Jesus, thou shalt surely find Jesus.

If, however, thou seekest thyself, thou shalt also find thyself, but to thine own ruin.

For if a man seek not Jesus, he doth him-

self more harm than the whole world and all his enemies could do.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Of Intimate Friendship with Jesus*



WHEN JESUS is present, all is well, and nothing seemeth difficult; but when Jesus is absent, everything is hard.

When Jesus speaketh not within us, all comfort is worthless; but if Jesus speaketh but one word, we feel great consolation.

Did not Mary Magdalene rise forthwith from the place where she wept when Martha said to her: *The Master is come and calleth for thee?*

O happy hour, when Jesus calleth thee from tears to joy of spirit!

How dry and hard is thy heart without Jesus! How foolish and vain thou art if thou desirest aught but Jesus!

Doth not this hurt thee more than if thou wert to lose the whole world?

2. What can the world bestow on thee without Jesus?

To be without Jesus is a grievous hell, and to be with Jesus is a sweet paradise.

If Jesus is with thee, no enemy can hurt thee.

He that findeth Jesus findeth a great treasure, yea, a good above all good.

And he that loseth Jesus loseth exceeding much, yea, more than the whole world.

He is poor, indeed, that liveth without Jesus; and he is very rich that findeth favour with Jesus.

3. It is a great art to know how to converse with Jesus; and to know how to keep Jesus is great wisdom.

Be humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee.

Thou canst easily drive Jesus away and forfeit His favour by turning aside to creatures. And if thou drivest Him from thee and lovest Him, to whom wilt thou fly, and whom wilt thou then seek for thy friend?

Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus is not thy friend above all others, thou shalt be sad and desolate indeed.

Thou actest therefore foolishly by trusting or rejoicing in any other.

It were better for thee to have the whole world against thee than Jesus angry with thee.

Among all, therefore, that are dear to thee let Jesus alone be specially beloved.

4. Love all others for Jesus' sake, but Jesus for Himself.

Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be loved, who alone is found good and faithful above all friends.

For Him and in Him let both friends and foes be dear to thee, and for them all thou must beseech Him that they may know and love Him too.

Never desire to be singularly praised or beloved, for that belongeth only to God, who hath no equal.

Neither shouldst thou wish that anyone be taken up with thee in his heart, nor do thou be engaged with the love of anyone; but let Jesus be in thee and in all good men.

5. Be pure and free of heart without the entanglement of any creature.

Thou must be disengaged and keep thy heart clean before God, if thou wouldst find rest and see how sweet the Lord is.

And in truth unless thou art moved and attracted by His grace, thou shalt never arrive at this, that having renounced and dismissed all creatures thou mayest only be united to Him alone.

For when the grace of God visiteth a man, then he becometh capable of all things; and when it leaveth him, then he is poor and weak, abandoned, as it were, only to scourges.

Yet he must not be discouraged or despondent in consequence, but calmly conform himself to the will of God; and endure in honour of Jesus Christ all that may befall him; for after winter followeth summer, after night the day returneth, and after the storm cometh a great calm.

## CHAPTER IX

*Of Foregoing all Consolation*

**T**is not difficult to despise human consolation, when divine comfort is at hand. But it is something great, yea, very great, to be able to forego all comfort, both human and divine, and to be willing to suffer desolation of heart without reluctance for the glory of God, and to seek thyself in nothing, nor regard thine own merit.

Is it surprising that thou art cheerful and devout, when grace cometh to thee? That hour seemeth desirable to all.

He rideth an easy saddle who is carried by God's grace.

And what wonder if he feeleth no burden, who is borne by the Almighty, and led by the Sovereign Guide?

2. We would fain have something for our comfort; and it is hard for a man to lay aside his own self.

The holy martyr Lawrence overcame the world with the priest to whom he ministered, for he despised all that seemed pleasant on earth; and for the love of Christ he patiently suffered even God's high-priest, Pope Sixtus, whom he greatly loved, to be taken from him.

Accordingly he overcame the love of man by the love of the Creator; and to human

consolation he preferred the good pleasure of God.

Learn thou in like manner to part with a near and dear friend for the love of God.

And be not troubled when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that at last we must all part from one another.

3. A man must struggle hard and long with himself before learning to overcome himself perfectly and to give his whole heart to God.

When a man is actuated by self-love, he readily stoopeth to human comforts.

On the contrary, a true lover of Christ who is diligent in the pursuit of virtue hath no liking for such consolations, nor seeketh such sensible delights; but he preferreth to undertake arduous exercises and hard labours for Christ's sake.

4. Accordingly, when God granteth thee spiritual comfort, receive it with gratitude, but understand that it is a free gift of God, not thy due.

Be not puffed up, rejoyce not excessively, entertain no vain presumption; but rather let this favour make thee more humble; more careful also and devout in all thine actions; for that hour will pass, and temptation will follow.

When comfort is withdrawn, do not straight-way despair; but with humility and patience await the heavenly visitation; for God is able to restore to thee more abundant consolation.



This is not new nor strange to them that are skilled in the way of God; for the great Saints and Prophets of old have often experienced this alternate change.

5. Hence David, enjoying the presence of grace, spoke thus: *In my abundance I said, I shall never be moved.*

But he added what he experienced within himself when grace was withdrawn, saying: *Thou didst turn away Thy face from me, and I became troubled.*

Yet herein he doth in no wise despair, but more earnestly beseecheth the Lord and saith: *To Thee, O Lord, will I cry; and I will make supplication to my God.*

At length he reapeth the fruit of his prayer, and testifieth that he is heard in these words: *The Lord hath heard, and hath had mercy on me: the Lord became my helper.*

But wherein? *Thou hast turned, saith he, my mourning into joy; and hast compassed me with gladness.*

If great saints were treated in this manner, we who are spiritually weak and poor must not be discouraged if we feel ourselves at one time fervent, at another cold; for the Spirit cometh and goeth according to His own good pleasure.

And hence holy Job said: *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and Thou provest him suddenly.*

6. Wherein then can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but solely in the great

mercy of God and the expectation of heavenly grace?

For whether I have with me good men, or devout brethren, or faithful friends, or holy books, or beautiful treatises, or sweet canticles and hymns, all these afford but little help and little relish when I am forsaken by grace and left in mine own poverty.

At such a time there is no better remedy than patience and resignation to the will of God.

7. I have never met a man, however holy and pious, who did not sometimes experience a withdrawal of grace or feel a decrease of fervour.

There was no saint, however highly rapt and enlightened, who was not tempted sooner or later.

No one indeed is worthy of the lofty contemplation of God, unless he hath for God's sake been tried by tribulation.

For the temptation which precedeth is commonly a sign that consolation will follow.

And heavenly comfort is promised to those who have been tried by temptation. *To him that overcometh, saith the Lord, I will give to eat of the tree of life.*

8. For divine consolation is given to man, that he may be the stronger to bear adversity.

And temptation followeth lest he glory in the favour.

The devil sleepeth not, neither is the flesh as yet dead. Cease not, therefore, to prepare thyself for the fray, for both on the right and on the left are enemies who never rest.

## CHAPTER X

### *Of Gratitude for the Grace of God*



WHY seekest thou rest, where-  
 thou art born to labour?

Prepare thyself to practise patience rather than to taste consolation, and to carry the Cross rather than to rejoice.

Indeed, what person living in the world would not willingly accept spiritual comfort and joy if he could always have them?

Spiritual consolations certainly surpass all the delights of the world and the pleasures of the flesh.

For all earthly pleasures are either vain or shameful; on the contrary, spiritual delights only are agreeable and noble, sprung from virtue and infused by God into pure hearts. But no one can enjoy these divine consolations whenever he liketh, because the time of temptation never waiteth long.

2. Besides, a false liberty of mind and excessive self-confidence greatly hinder the heavenly visitation.

God acteth well in giving the grace of con-

solation to man; but man acteth badly in not referring it all to God with gratitude.

And this is why the gifts of grace cannot abundantly flow upon us, because we are ungrateful to the giver, and do not return everything to the source whence it came.

For grace is ever rightly given to him that is truly grateful; and that which is wont to be granted to the humble is withheld from the proud.

3. I do not want the consolation which depriveth me of compunction, nor do I desire the grace of contemplation which maketh me conceited.

For all that is lofty is not holy, nor is all that is sweet likewise good; neither is every desire pure, nor all that is dear to us also pleasing to God.

I welcome that grace by which I may ever become more humble and devout, and more ready to renounce myself.

He that hath been taught by the bestowal of grace, and instructed by the chastisement of its withdrawal, will not venture to attribute any good to himself, but will rather own that he is poor and destitute.

*Render to God the things that are God's, and attribute to thyself what is thine; that is, be grateful to God for His grace, and acknowledge that thy sins and the punishments due to thy sins are to be imputed to thee alone.*

4. Put thyself always in the lowest place, and the highest shall be given thee; for the highest cannot stand without the lowest.

The saints who are greatest before God, are the least in their own estimation; and the higher they are exalted in glory, the more humble they are in themselves.

Being full of truth and heavenly bliss, they are not *desirous of vainglory*.

Being grounded and established in God, they can by no means be haughty.

And **as** they attribute to God all the good they have received, they do not seek glory one from another, but look for the glory which is from God alone; and they wish above all things that God may be praised in Himself and in all His saints, and this they ever keep in view.

5. Be then grateful for the least grace, so shalt thou be worthy to receive more.

Let the smallest blessing be to thee of very great value, and look on a mere trifle as a special gift.

If we consider the dignity of the giver, no gift will appear little or insignificant. For that cannot be mean which is granted by the most high God.

Yea, if He gave us sufferings and stripes, these ought to be acceptable; because He hath always our salvation at heart, no matter what He alloweth to befall us.

He that is desirous of preserving the grace of God, must be grateful for grace when it

is given, patient when it is taken away; he must pray that it may return, and be cautious and humble lest he lose it.

## CHAPTER XI

*That the Lovers of the Cross of Jesus are Few*



**I**ESUS hath now many friends of His heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of His cross.

He hath many lovers of consolation, but few of His distress.

He findeth many companions of His table, but few of His abstinence.

All desire to rejoice with Him, few will suffer something for Him.

Many follow Jesus to the breaking of bread, but few to the drinking of the chalice of His Passion.

Many reverence His miracles, few seek the ignominy of His cross.

Many love Jesus, so long as they meet with no adversity.

Many praise and bless Him, so long as they receive some comforts from Him.

But if Jesus hideth Himself, and leaveth them for a little while, they take either to complaints or to excessive dejection.

2. But they that love Jesus for Jesus' sake, and not for any comfort of their own, bless Him in all tribulation and anguish of heart as well as in the sweetest consolation.

And if He should never give them comfort, they would notwithstanding always praise Him, and always give Him thanks.

3. Oh, how powerful is the pure love of Jesus, unalloyed with self-interest or self-love!

Must they not all be called hirelings, who always go in search of comforts?

Are they not evidently lovers of themselves rather than of Christ, who are always bent upon their own convenience and gain? Where shall we find a man who is willing to serve God for nought?

4. Rarely do we meet with anyone so spiritual as to be wholly disengaged.

For who shall find a man that is truly poor in spirit and detached from all creatures?

*Far and from the utmost coasts is the price of him.*

If a man should give all his substance, it is as yet nothing.

And if he should do great penance, it is still but little.

And if he should attain to all knowledge, he is yet far off.

And if he should possess great virtue, and an exceeding fervent devotion, much is still wanting—the one thing which is most necessary for him.

What is this? That having left all things, he leave himself also, and go wholly out of himself, and retain none of his self-love.

And that when he hath done all he knew he had to do, he should think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not highly prize what might be highly valued; but let him confess in all earnest that he is a useless servant, as the Truth saith: *When you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants.*

Then shall he be truly poor and destitute in spirit, and say with the Prophet David: *I am alone and poor.*

Yet there is none more affluent, none more powerful, none more free than this man, who can abandon himself and all things else, and account himself the least of all.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Of the King's Highway of the Holy Cross*



O many this seemeth a hard saying: *Deny thyself, take up thy Cross and follow Jesus.*

But it will be much harder to hear that last word: *Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire.*

For they who now willingly hear and follow the word of the Cross shall not then fear the sentence of eternal damnation. This sign of the Cross shall be in the heavens, when the Lord shall come to judge.

Then all the servants of the Cross who have conformed themselves to the Crucified in life shall draw near to Christ their Judge with great confidence.



2. Why then fearest thou to take up the Cross which leadeth to the kingdom?

In the Cross is salvation, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection from our enemies.

In the Cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross is joy of spirit.

In the Cross is the fullness of virtue, in the Cross is the perfection of sanctity.

There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of eternal life, but in the Cross.

Therefore take up thy Cross and follow Jesus, and thou shalt enter into life everlasting.

Jesus went before thee bearing His own Cross, and on the Cross He died for thee; that thou shouldst also carry thy Cross, and shouldst willingly die on the Cross.

For if thou diest with Him, thou shalt also live with Him.

And if thou art His companion in suffering, so shalt thou be in glory.

3. Behold! all is contained in the Cross, and all is included in dying; and there is no other way to life and true inward peace but the way of the Holy Cross and of daily mortification.

Go where thou wilt, seek what thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the Holy Cross.

Dispose and order all things according to

thy wish and whim, and still thou shalt find that thou hast always something to suffer, whether thou like it or not; and so thou shalt ever find a Cross.

For thou shalt either feel pain in the body, or endure in the soul some spiritual trouble.

4. At one time thou shalt be abandoned by God, at another disturbed by thy neighbour; and what is more, often thou shalt be burdensome to thyself.

Yet thou canst not be freed or eased by any remedy or comfort; but so long as it pleaseth God, thou must bear it.

For God willeth that thou shouldst learn to suffer tribulation without consolation, and that thou shouldst submit thyself wholly to Him, and by thy trouble become more humble.

No one hath a more heartfelt sense of the Passion of Christ than he who suffereth similarly.

The Cross is then always ready, and everywhere awaiteth thee.

Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou runnest; for wherever thou goest, thou carriest thyself with thee, and thou shalt ever find thyself.

Cast thine eyes upwards, cast them downwards, cast them outwards, cast them inwards, everywhere thou shalt find a cross.

And everywhere thou must needs practise patience, if thou wouldst have inward peace and merit an everlasting crown.

5. If thou carriest the Cross willingly, it will carry thee, and lead thee to the desired end, where suffering will cease at last, though that will not be here.

If thou bearest it reluctantly, thou makest it a burden to thyself and increasest thy load, which thou must carry notwithstanding.

If thou castest away one cross, thou shalt doubtlessly meet with another, which will perhaps be heavier.

6. Dost thou think to escape what no mortal could ever avoid? What saint hath been in the world without cross and tribulation? Yea, not even was our Lord Jesus Christ for one hour during His life without the anguish of suffering, as He said: *It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, and so to enter into His glory.*

And why seekest thou another way than this royal road, which is the highway of the Holy Cross?

7. Christ's whole life was a cross and a martyrdom: and wilt thou seek for thyself rest and joy?

Thou errest, oh! thou errest, if thou seekest aught else but to suffer trials; for this whole mortal life is full of miseries, and marked round about with crosses.

And the more a man hath advanced in spirit, the heavier crosses he often findeth, because the pain of his banishment increaseth with the love of God.

8. Yet such a man, in so many ways afflicted, is not without the soothing of consolation, because he perceiveth the great fruit he reapeth from the bearing of his Cross.

For as he voluntarily submitteth himself to it, all the sorrow of his tribulation is changed into a firm hope of divine consolation.

And the more the body is weakened by suffering, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace.

Yea, sometimes he is so animated by the desire of tribulation and adversity for the sake of conformity to the Cross of Christ that he would not wish to be without pain and affliction: for he believeth that the greater and harder the suffering is, which he endureth for God's sake, the more acceptable he will be to Him.

9. It is not the power of man, but the grace of God, which can do and doeth so much in the frail flesh, that in the fervour of spirit it accepteth and loveth what naturally it always disliketh and shunneth.

Man is not naturally inclined to bear the Cross, to love the Cross, to chastise the body and bring it into subjection; to fly honours, to suffer insults cheerfully, to despise himself and wish to be despised; to endure all kinds of adversities and losses, and to desire no prosperity in this world.

If thou examinest thyself, thou wilt find that thou hast not the strength to do these things.

But if thou trustest in the Lord, power shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and the flesh shall be subject to thy sway.

And thou shalt not fear thine enemy the devil, provided thou art armed with faith, and signed with the Cross of Christ.

10. Dispose thyself, therefore, as a good and faithful servant of Christ, to carry manfully the Cross of thy Lord, crucified for the love of thee.

Prepare thyself to suffer many adversities and various troubles in this miserable life; for so it will be with thee wherever thou art; and so thou shalt surely find it wherever thou mayest hide thyself.

It must be so, and there is no means of escaping the anguish and pain of evils, but by disposing thyself to patient endurance.

Drink the chalice of thy Lord with affection, if thou wishest to be His friend and to have part with Him.

As regards comforts, commit them to God; let Him do with them as it seemeth best to Him.

But do thou prepare thyself to bear tribulations, and consider them the greatest comforts; for the sufferings of this time, even if thou alone couldst endure them all, are not worthy to merit the glory to come.

11. When thou shalt attain to this, that tribulation is sweet and agreeable to thee for Christ's sake, then think that it is well with

thee, for thou hast found a paradise on earth.

So long as it seemeth grievous to thee to suffer, and thou wishest to flee, thou shalt feel ill at ease, and the tribulation thou triest to escape will follow thee everywhere.

12. But if thou disposest thyself, as thou oughtest, to suffer and to die, it will soon go better with thee, and thou shalt find peace.

Though thou shouldst have been rapt even to the third heaven with Saint Paul, thou art not thereby safe from adversity. *I will show him, said Jesus, how great things he must suffer for My name's sake.*

It remaineth then for thee to suffer if thou wishest to love Jesus and to serve Him constantly.

13. Oh, that thou wert worthy to suffer something for the name of Jesus! what glory would it be for thee! what joy for the saints of God, and what edification for thy neighbour!

All, indeed, recommend forbearance; but few there are that will bear something.

It were but right that thou shouldst willingly suffer a little for Christ, since many endure more for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou must live here as if dying. And the more a man dieth to himself, so much the more he beginneth to live unto God.

No one can rise to the understanding of

heavenly things unless he hath stooped to the endurance of adversity for Christ's sake.

Thou canst do nothing more pleasing to God nor more profitable to thyself in this world than to suffer cheerfully for Christ's sake.

And if thou couldst choose, thou shouldst prefer to bear trials for Christ rather than to be refreshed with many consolations; because thou wouldst thus resemble Christ more and conform more to all the saints.

For our merit and our progress in the spiritual life do not consist in enjoying many delights and comforts, but rather in enduring great troubles and trials.

15. If, indeed, there had been anything better and fitter for man's salvation than suffering, Christ would assuredly have shown it by word and example.

But now He clearly exhorteth both the disciples that accompany Him and all who wish to follow Him, to carry the Cross saying: *If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow Me.*

So that when we have read and examined all, this must be the final conclusion: *That through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.*





# Book the Third Of the Blessed Sacrament

## A Devout Exhortation to Holy Communion

### THE VOICE OF CHRIST

*Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith the Lord.*

*The bread that I will give is My Flesh, for the life of the world.*

*Take ye and eat: this is My Body, which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of Me. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me, and I in him.*

*The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

### CHAPTER I

#### *With what Reverence Christ ought to be received*

### THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



THESE are Thy words, O Christ, Eternal Truth, though not all spoken at one time, nor written in one place.

As then they are Thine, and true, I must receive them all thankfully and faithfully.

They are Thine, and Thou hast spoken them; and they are also mine, because Thou hast uttered them for my salvation. I receive them with pleasure from Thy

lips, that they may be the more deeply imprinted in my heart.

These most gracious words, so full of sweetness and of love, encourage me; but mine own sins frighten me, and mine impure conscience restraineth me from receiving so sublime a sacrament.

I am attracted by the sweetness of Thy words, but burdened by the multitude of my sins.

2. Thou biddest me to come confidently unto Thee, if I would have part with Thee; and to receive the food of immortality if I wish to obtain everlasting life and glory.

*Come to Me, Thou sayest, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.*

O word, loving and sweet to the ears of a sinner, that Thou, O Lord my God, invitest a poor and needy creature to the communion of Thy most holy Body!

But who am I, O Lord, that I should venture to approach Thee?

Behold *the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee*, and Thou sayest, *Come ye all to Me.*

3. What meaneth this most gracious condescension, and this so friendly invitation? How shall I dare to approach, who am not conscious of any good on which I may rely? How shall I bring Thee into my house, who have so often offended Thy most gracious countenance?

The angels and archangels stand in awe, the saints and just are filled with holy

fear, and Thou sayest: Come ye all to Me. Unless Thou, O Lord, didst say this, who could believe it to be true?

And unless Thou didst command it, who would attempt to approach Thee?

4. Behold Noe, a just man, laboured a hundred years in building the ark, that he might be saved with a few others from the impending flood; and how **can** I prepare myself in one hour to receive with due honour the Builder of the world.

Moses, Thy great servant and special friend, made an ark of incorruptible wood, which he also covered with the purest gold, that he might place therein the tables of the law; and shall I, a corrupt creature, so rashly dare to receive Thee, who art the Maker of the law and the Giver of life?

Solomon, the wisest of the kings of Israel, spent seven years in building a magnificent temple in honour of Thy name.

And for eight days he celebrated the feast of its dedication; he offered a thousand peace-offerings, and he solemnly brought the Ark of the Covenant into the place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets and great rejoicing.

And how shall I, the poorest and meanest of men, bring Thee into my house, I who can scarcely spend one half-hour devoutly to prepare my soul for Thy visit? And would to God I might once thus pass about half an hour worthily!

5. O my God, what great things did those worthy men endeavour to do to please Thee! Alas, how little is it that I do! how short a time I spend in preparing myself for holy Communion!

I am but seldom wholly recollected; still more rarely free from all distractions.

Yet in the presence of Thy saving Godhead no improper thought should occur to me, nor should any creature engage my attention; for it is not an angel I am about to entertain, but the Lord of angels.

6. There is indeed a very great difference between the ark of the covenant with its hallowed contents, and Thy most glorious Body with its ineffable powers; between those legal offerings, figures of things to come, and Thy Body, the true victim, the fulfilment of all the ancient sacrifices.

Why then am I not inflamed with a greater desire for Thine adorable presence!

Why do I not prepare myself with greater care to partake of Thy sacred mysteries, seeing that those ancient holy patriarchs and prophets, kings also and princes, with all the people of Israel, showed such fervour of devotion in the service of the Lord?

7. The most pious king David danced before the ark of God with all his might, remembering the favours bestowed in time past upon his forefathers; he made instruments of divers kinds, composed

psalms, and appointed them to be sung with rejoicing; he sang them also frequently himself, playing on the harp, being inspired with the grace of the Holy Ghost; he taught the people of Israel to praise God with all their heart, and with harmonious voices to bless and glorify Him every day.

If so much piety was then displayed, and the praises of God were so constantly rehearsed before the ark of the covenant, what reverence and devotion ought I and all Christian people to show now in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and in the reception of the most holy Body of Christ!

8. Many run to sundry places to visit the relics of the saints; and having heard the marvels of their holy lives, they admire the great temples built in their honour; they behold and kiss their sacred bones, wrapped up in silk and gold.

And lo! Thou art here present before me on the altar, O my God, Holy of holies, Creator of men, and Lord of angels.

Often in visiting those shrines men are moved by curiosity and the novelty of the sight, and little fruit of amendment resulteth from these pilgrimages; especially when persons run so lightly from one place to another without true contrition.

But here in the Sacrament of the altar Thou art really present, God and Man, Christ Jesus; and here abundant fruits of

eternal salvation are obtained, as often as Thou art worthily and devoutly received. And to this Sacrament we are not attracted by any levity, curiosity or sensuality; but by firm faith, devout hope and sincere charity.

9. O God, invisible Creator of the world, how wonderfully dost Thou deal with us! How sweetly and graciously dost Thou act with Thine elect, to whom Thou givest Thyself as food in this Sacrament!

This indeed surpasseth all understanding; this moveth in a special manner the hearts of Thy devout servants and enkindleth their love.

For Thy true faithful, who make it the aim of their whole life to advance in perfection, often receive from this most holy Sacrament a great grace of devotion and love of virtue.

10. Oh, the wonderful hidden grace of this Sacrament, which is only known to the faithful of Christ, and which unbelievers and sinners cannot experience!

In this Sacrament spiritual grace is imparted, the strength which the soul had lost is recovered, and inward beauty disfigured by sin is restored.

And this grace is sometimes so great that from the fullness of devotion which it imparteth, not only the soul, but even the frail body, deriveth an increase of strength.

11. But we must greatly bewail and deplore our coldness and negligence, and that we are not moved with more fervour to receive Christ, in whom is all the hope and merit of the elect.

For He is our sanctification and our redemption; He is the comfort of pilgrims on earth, and the eternal joy of the saints.

It is therefore much to be lamented that many think so little on this saving mystery, which delighteth heaven and preserveth the whole world.

Alas, the blindness and hardness of man's heart, that doth not set more value on so ineffable a gift, and even cometh by daily use to treat it with want of reverence!

12. For if this most holy Sacrament could only be adored in one place, and only consecrated by one priest in the world, how ardently, thinkest thou, would men desire to see that place and that priest of God, that they might witness the celebration of the divine mysteries!

And now many have been made priests, and in many places Christ is offered; so that the more widely the holy Communion is spread throughout the world, the better may appear the kindness and love of God for man.

Thanks be to Thee, good Jesus, eternal Shepherd of our souls, who hast vouchsafed to refresh us poor exiles with Thy precious Body and Blood, and also to in-

vite us with the words of Thine own mouth to receive this Sacrament, saying: *Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.*

## CHAPTER II

*That God manifesteth His great Goodness and Love to Man in the Blessed Sacrament*

THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



**T**RUSTING in Thy goodness, and in Thy great mercy, O Lord, I come, as one sick to the healer, as one hungry and thirsty to the fountain of life, as one in need to the King of heaven, as a servant to his master, as a creature to the creator, as one in desolation to his kind comforter.

But whence is this to me that Thou shouldst come to me? Who am I, that Thou shouldst give Thyself to me?

How doth a sinner dare to appear before Thee? And how dost Thou vouchsafe to come to a sinner?

Thou knowest Thy servant, and Thou art aware that there is no good quality in him, which can move Thee to grant him this favour.

I therefore confess my nothingness, I acknowledge Thy goodness, I praise Thy



kindness, and I thank Thee for Thy exceeding great charity.

Indeed Thou doest this by sheer generosity, not for any merits of mine; but that Thy goodness may be better known to me, that Thy love may be more abundantly infused into me, and that the practice of humility may become more agreeable to me. And whereas such is Thy pleasure, and Thou hast commanded that it should be so, Thy condescension is also pleasing to me; and would that mine iniquity may prove no hindrance!

2. O most sweet and gracious Jesus, what reverence and thanksgiving, together with perpetual praise, are due to Thee, for the Communion of Thy sacred Body, whose dignity no man is able to express!

But what shall be my thoughts in this holy Communion, when I approach to my Lord, whom I cannot duly honour, and yet desire devoutly to receive?

What can I imagine more proper and more profitable than to humble myself deeply before Thee, and to exalt Thine infinite goodness towards me?

I praise Thee, my God, and glorify Thee for ever; I disregard myself, and subject myself to Thee, in the depths of my nothingness.

3. Behold, Thou art the Holy of holies, and I am the vilest of sinners!

Behold, Thou inclinest Thyself to me, who

am not worthy to raise mine eyes to Thee! Behold, Thou comest to me, Thou wishest to be with me, Thou invitest me to Thy banquet.

Thou wilt give me a heavenly food and the bread of angels to eat, which is, indeed, no other than Thyself, *the living bread, which came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.*

4. Behold whence love proceedeth, and what condescension is shown us here! Oh, what gratitude and praise we owe Thee in return!

Oh, how profitable and useful was Thy design in instituting this Sacrament! How sweet and delightful is the banquet in which Thou givest Thyself as food!

How admirable is Thine operation, O Lord! How mighty is Thy power, how infallible is Thy truth!

For Thou didst speak, and all things were made; and this also was done, which Thou didst command.

5. It is a wondrous mystery and worthy of our Faith, and surpassing human understanding, that Thou, O Lord my God, true God and Man, art wholly present under the appearance of a little bread and wine, and that Thou art eaten by them that receive Thee without being consumed.

O Lord of all things, who art in want of nothing, Thou who wouldst dwell in us by means of this Sacrament, preserve my

heart and my body undefiled, that I may with a joyful and pure conscience frequently celebrate Thy mysteries and receive for mine eternal salvation what Thou hast especially appointed and instituted for Thine honour and a perpetual memorial.

6. Rejoice, O my soul, and give thanks to God for so noble a gift and so singular a comfort left to thee in this vale of tears.

For as often **ms** thou celebratest this mystery and receivest the Body of Christ, so often thou performest the work of thy redemption and becomest a partaker of all the merits of Christ.

For the charity of Christ is never diminished and the greatness of His atonement is never exhausted.

Therefore, thou must always prepare thyself for this work with new spiritual fervour, and dwell with attentive consideration on this great mystery of our salvation.

When thou celebratest or hearest Mass, this act should seem to thee as great, as new and as pleasing as if on that day Christ, first descending into the Virgin's womb, were made Man, or, hanging on the Cross, suffered and died for the salvation of mankind.

## CHAPTER III

*That it is Profitable to Communicate often*

THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



BEHOLD, O Lord, I come to Thee, that it may be well with me by Thy gift, and that I may rejoice in Thy holy banquet, which *in Thy sweetness, O God, Thou hast prepared for the poor.*

Behold, in Thee is all that I can or must desire; Thou art my salvation and redemption, my hope and strength, my honour and glory.

Gladden, then, to-day the soul of Thy servant, for *to Thee, O Lord Jesus, I have lifted up my soul.*

I desire to receive Thee now devoutly and reverently; I long to bring Thee into my house, that I may merit with Zacheus to be blessed by Thee, and to be numbered among the children of Abraham.

My soul hath a great desire to receive Thy Body, my heart longeth to be united to Thee.

2. Give Thyself to me, and it sufficeth, for without Thee no consolation availeth.

Without Thee I cannot be; and without Thy visit I cannot live.

Therefore I must needs often come to Thee and receive Thee ■■ the medicine of my salvation, lest perhaps I faint on the way when deprived of this heavenly food.

For thus, O most merciful Jesus, Thou didst speak on one occasion when preaching to the people and curing divers diseases: *I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.*

Deal, therefore, in like manner with me now, as Thou hast vouchsafed to remain in this Sacrament for the comfort of thy faithful.

For Thou art the sweet refection of the soul; and he that eateth Thee worthily shall be a partaker and heir of everlasting glory.

It is indeed necessary for me, who so often stumble and sin, so easily languish and faint, that by frequent prayer and confession and the sacred communion of Thy Body I should renew, cleanse and rouse myself, lest perhaps, by abstaining too long, I swerve from my holy purpose.

3. *For the imaginations of man are prone to evil from his youth;* and unless he is supported by this divine remedy, he soon falleth into sin.

But holy Communion withdraweth man from evil and strengtheneth him in good.

And if now I am so often careless and cold, though I communicate or celebrate, what would it be if I did not take this remedy nor seek so great a help?

And though I am not prepared nor sufficiently well disposed to celebrate every day, yet I will endeavour at suitable times

to receive the divine Mysteries and to become partaker of so great a grace.

For this is the chief comfort of a faithful soul whilst on her pilgrimage far away from Thee in this mortal body, that, often mindful of her God, she may receive her beloved Lord with sincere devotion.

4. Oh, the wonderful condescension of Thy kindness towards us, that Thou, O Lord God, who hast created and animated all the angelic spirits, dost vouchsafe to come to a poor human creature and appease its hunger with both Thy divinity and humanity!

O happy heart and blessed soul, prepared to receive Thee, Lord God, with devotion, and in receiving Thee to be filled with spiritual joy!

Oh, how great a Lord such a soul entertaineth, how beloved a guest she introduceth, how delightful a companion she receiveth, how faithful a friend she welcometh, how beautiful and noble a spouse she embraceth, lovely above all that is dear and desirable!

Let heaven and earth and all the furniture of them keep silence before Thee, O my most dearly Beloved; for whatever they contain which is praiseworthy and comely proceedeth from the favour of Thy bounty, and shall never approach the beauty of Thy name, O Lord, *whose wisdom hath no bounds.*

## CHAPTER IV

*That many Favours are bestowed upon those  
who Communicate devoutly*

THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



LORD my God, visit Thy servant with the blessings of Thy sweetness, that so I may be disposed to approach this august Sacrament worthily and devoutly.

Raise my heart to Thee, and rid me of my dullness. *Visit me with Thy salvation*, that my soul may taste Thy sweetness, which is hid abundantly in this Sacrament as in a fountain.

Enlighten also mine eyes to behold so great a mystery, and strengthen me with unflinching faith to believe it.

For this is Thine action, not human power; Thy sacred institution, not man's invention. Indeed, no one can of himself understand and penetrate these marvels, which exceed even the intellect of the angels.

What then shall I, a wretched sinner, dust and ashes, be able to investigate and understand of so sublime a mystery?

2. I approach Thee, O Lord, with hope and reverence, in the simplicity of my heart, with a good and firm faith, because Thou hast commanded it; and I truly believe that

Thou art here present in this Sacrament, both God and Man.

It is then Thy will that I should receive Thee and unite myself to Thee in charity.

Wherefore I beseech Thy clemency, and implore Thee to grant me a special grace, that I may wholly melt and overflow with love for Thee, and that I may henceforth seek no other consolation but Thee.

For this most high and most august Sacrament is the health of soul and body, the remedy for every spiritual complaint; by which my vices are cured, my passions bridled, my temptations overcome or lessened; by which an increase of grace is imparted, virtue is made to grow, faith is confirmed, hope strengthened, love inflamed and enlarged.

3. Thou hast indeed granted, and still often grantest, many blessings in this Sacrament to Thy friends who communicate devoutly, O my God, the protector of my soul, the healer of human weakness and the giver of all inward comfort.

For Thou inspirest them with great courage in all their trials, and raisest them from the depths of their depression to the hope of Thy protection; and Thou inwardly refreshest and enlightenest them with an extraordinary grace, so that, whereas before holy Communion they were in trouble and without devotion, being now refreshed with this heavenly meat and



drink, they find themselves changed for the better.

And so Thou distributest Thy gifts to Thine elect, that they may truly know and plainly feel how weak they are of themselves and what goodness and grace they receive from Thee.

For of themselves they are cold, hardened and insensible; but by Thee they are made fervent, diligent and devout.

And who, indeed, will humbly approach the fountain of sweetness without carrying away a taste thereof?

Or who standeth by a great fire, without feeling some little heat therefrom?

And Thou, O Lord, art a fountain always full and overflowing, a fire always burning and never failing.

4. If then I am not permitted to draw from the fullness of the fountain, nor to drink my fill, yet I will put my lips to the outlet of this heavenly conduit, that I may obtain at least a drop to quench my thirst lest I completely wither.

And though I cannot as yet be wholly heavenly and wholly inflamed like the Cherubim and Seraphim, still I will strive to rouse myself to devotion, and prepare my heart that I may obtain at least a spark of divine fire, by humbly partaking of this life-giving Sacrament.

And whatsoever is wanting in me, do Thou, O good Jesus, most blessed Saviour, kindly

and graciously supply for me, as Thou hast vouchsafed to invite all unto Thee, saying: *Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.*

5. I labour indeed in the sweat of my brow, I am tormented with grief of heart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations, I am ensnared and harassed by many evil passions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but Thou, O Lord God, my Saviour, to whom I commit myself and all I have, that Thou wouldst guard me and bring me to life everlasting.

Uphold me for the honour and glory of Thy name, Thou who hast prepared Thy Body and Blood to be my meat and drink.

Grant, O Lord God, my Saviour, that by the frequent Communion of this Sacrament, the fervour of my devotion may increase.

## CHAPTER V

*Of the Dignity of this Sacrament, and of the Priestly State*

## THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



**F** thou hadst the purity of an angel and the sanctity of Saint John the Baptist, thou shouldst not be worthy to receive or handle this Sacrament.

For no human merits can entitle us to expect that a man should consecrate and handle the Blessed Sacrament of Christ, and receive the bread of angels for his food.

Sublime is this mystery, and great is the dignity of priests, to whom is given what is not granted to the angels.

For only priests duly ordained in the Church have power to celebrate, and to consecrate the Body of Christ.

The priest indeed is the minister of God, using the word of God, by the command and institution of God; but God is here the chief author and invisible worker, to whom all He willeth is subject, and all He commandeth is obedient.

2. In this august Sacrament, therefore, thou must have more faith in God, who is almighty, than in thine own sense or in any visible sign.

And hence thou must undertake this work with fear and reverence.

Take heed to thyself, and see whose ministry hath been committed to thee, by the imposition of the bishop's hands.

Behold, thou hast been made a priest and ordained to celebrate; see to it now that thou offerest faithfully and devoutly sacrifice to God in due season, and that thy conduct be without blame.

Thou hast not lightened thy burden, but thou art now bound with a straiter band of discipline, and obliged to a greater perfection of sanctity.

A priest must be adorned with every virtue, and set to others the example of a good life.

He ought not to walk in the common ways of worldly people, but like the angels in heaven, or perfect men on earth.

3. A priest clad with the sacred vestments holdeth the place of Christ, that he may earnestly and humbly pray to God for himself and for all the people.

He hath before and behind him the sign of the Cross of our Lord, that he may ever remember the Passion of Christ.

Before him he beareth the Cross on the chasuble, that he may diligently behold the footsteps of Christ, and fervently strive to follow in them.

He is marked with the Cross behind him, that he may meekly bear for God's sake all the injuries done him by others.

He carrieth the Cross before him, that he may bewail his own sins; and behind him, that in pity he may also lament the failings of others, and know that he is placed as a mediator between God and the sinner.

And he ought not to cease from prayer and sacrifice till he succeedeth in obtaining grace and mercy.

When a priest celebrateth Mass, he honoureth God, he delighteth the angels, he edifieth the Church, he helpeth the living, bestoweth rest on the departed, and maketh himself partaker of all good things.

## CHAPTER VI

### *A Question on the Exercise before Holy Communion*

#### THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



WHEN I consider Thy dignity, O Lord, and my meanness, I am exceedingly afraid, and confounded within myself.

For if I aproach not, I flee from life; and if I intrude myself unworthily, I incur Thy displeasure. What then shall I do, O my God, my Helper, and my Counsellor in my necessities?

2. Teach Thou me the right way; show me some short exercise suitable for holy Communion.

For it is useful to know how I can reverently and devoutly prepare my heart for Thee, to receive Thy Sacrament worthily, or also to offer so great and divine a sacrifice.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Of the Examination of our Conscience, and the Purpose of Amendment*

#### THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



**B**EFORE all things, a priest of God should come to offer, handle and receive this Sacrament with deep humility of heart and suppliant reverence, with a perfect faith and a pious intention of honouring God.

Examine thy conscience diligently, and cleanse and purify it to the best of thy power by true contrition and humble confession; so **be** not to conceal or to remember anything which might cause remorse and hinder thy free access to the Blessed Sacrament.

Be sorry for all thy sins in general, and bewail and lament thy daily transgressions more in detail.

And if there is time, acknowledge to God in the secrecy of thy heart all the troubles of thine evil inclinations.

2. Mourn and grieve because thou art still so

carnal and worldly, so unsubdued in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unguarded in thine outward senses, so often occupied with many vain imaginations, so much inclined to exterior, so heedless of interior, things, so prone to laughter and dissipation, so little moved to tears and compunction, so prompt to relaxation and material comfort, so sluggish to austerity and fervour, so curious to hear news and to see fine sights, so reluctant to choose what is humble and contemptible, so desirous of possessing much, so sparing in giving, so tenacious in keeping, so thoughtless in speech, so dissipated in time of silence, so disorderly in thy manners, so rude in thine actions, so absorbed in thy food, so deaf to the word of God, so eager to rest, so slow to labour, so vigilant in listening to tales, so drowsy at holy vigils, so hasty to end them, so inattentive in assisting at them, so negligent at the holy Office, so cold in celebrating, so dry in communicating, so easily distracted, so seldom wholly recollected, so quickly moved to anger, so ready to be displeased with others, so rash in judging them, so harsh in censuring them, so elated in prosperity, so dejected in adversity, so often making many good resolutions, and putting so little into practice.

3. When thou hast owned and deplored these and thine other defects with great regret and displeasure at the sight of thy

fickleness, make a firm resolution always to amend thy life and advance in virtue.

Then with full resignation and perfect readiness sacrifice thyself in honour of My name, on the altar of thy heart, as a perpetual holocaust, faithfully committing both thy body and soul to Me; that so thou mayest worthily approach to offer the holy sacrifice to God, and profitably receive the Sacrament of My Body.

4. For there is not a more suitable offering nor greater atonement for the cleansing of thy sins than to offer thyself wholly and entirely to God, together with the oblation of the Body of Christ in the Mass and in holy Communion.

When a man doeth what is in his power and is truly repentant, as often as he cometh to Me for pardon and grace: *As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live.* I will no more remember his sins, but all shall be forgiven him.



## CHAPTER VIII

*Of the Oblation of Christ on the Cross, and of  
our ~~OWN~~ Resignation*

## THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



S I offered Myself voluntarily for thy sins to God My Father, with outstretched hands and stripped of all upon the Cross, so that nothing remained in Me that was not wholly turned into a sacrifice of reconciliation to God; so thou shouldst also offer thyself willingly to Me every day at Mass with all thy powers and desires, as a pure and holy oblation, from the bottom of thy heart.

What more do I require of thee than that thou shouldst endeavour to commit thyself wholly to Me?

I regard not whatsoever thou givest besides thyself; for I seek not thy gift, but thee.

2. As it would not suffice thee to have all things without Me, so also, unless thou offerest thine own self, whatsoever else thou givest cannot please Me.

Offer thyself to Me, and give thyself wholly for God's sake, and thine oblation shall be agreeable.

Behold, I have offered Myself wholly to My Father for thee; I have also given both My Body and Blood as food, that I might

be all thine, and that thou mightest ever remain Mine.

But if thou withholdest thine own self, and dost not offer thyself freely according to My will, the oblation is not entire, neither will there be a perfect union between us.

Therefore a free oblation of thyself into the hands of God ought to precede all thine actions, if thou wouldst obtain liberty and grace.

Very few indeed become inwardly enlightened and free, because they cannot wholly deny themselves.

My maxim holdeth good: *Unless a man renounceth all, he cannot be My disciple.* If then thou wishest to be My disciple, offer thyself to Me with all thy desires.

## CHAPTER IX

*That we must offer ourselves and all we have to God, and pray for all*

THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



LORD, all that is in heaven and on earth is Thine.

I desire to offer myself to Thee as a voluntary oblation, and to remain for ever Thine.

Lord, in the simplicity of my heart, I offer myself to Thee this day, to be always Thy bondsman, for Thy service, and for a perpetual sacrifice of praise.

Accept me with this holy oblation of Thy precious Body, which I offer Thee this day in the presence of the angels who assist at it invisibly, that it may be for my salvation, and for that of all Thy people.

2. Lord, I place upon Thine acceptable altar all my sins and offences, which I have committed before Thee and Thy holy angels from the day when I could first commit sin to this hour; that Thou wouldst burn and consume them all without exception with the fire of Thy love; and that Thou wouldst blot out all the stains of my sins and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me Thy grace which I have lost by my transgressions, granting me full pardon of all, and mercifully admitting me to the kiss of peace.

3. What can I do for my sins, but humbly confess and bewail them, and unceasingly implore Thy mercy?

I beseech Thee, graciously hear me, now that I am in Thy presence, O my God!

All my sins displease me exceedingly; I will never commit them again; but I grieve and will grieve for them as long as I live; I am ready to do penance, and to give satisfaction to the utmost of my power.

Forgive me, O God, forgive me my sins, for the sake of Thy holy name; save my soul which Thou hast redeemed by Thy precious Blood.

Behold I commit myself to Thy mercy, I place myself in Thy hands.

Deal with me according to Thy goodness, not according to my malice and wickedness.

4. I also offer Thee all my good works, however few and imperfect they may be, that Thou wouldst purify and sanctify them; that Thou wouldst graciously accept them, and render them pleasing to Thee, and ever improve them; also that Thou wouldst bring me, a slothful and useless man, to a happy and blessed end.

5. I also lay before Thee all the pious desires of devout persons; the needs of my parents, friends, brothers, sisters, and of all who are dear unto me, and who have done good to me or to others for the love of Thee, and who have desired and asked me to say prayers and Masses for themselves and their friends, whether they are still in the flesh, or have already departed this life; that all may experience the assistance of Thy grace, the help of Thy consolation, protection in danger, deliverance from pain; and that, being freed from all evil, they may joyfully offer Thee their heartfelt thanks.

6. Moreover I offer Thee my prayers and peace-offerings for those especially who have in any way hurt, grieved or injured me, or have caused me any loss or inconvenience.

Also for all whom I have ever afflicted, troubled, burdened or scandalized, in word

or deed, knowingly or unknowingly; that Thou wouldst forgive us all our sins and mutual offences without distinction.

Take away from our hearts, O Lord, all mistrust, disdain, wrath and contention, and whatsoever may wound charity and lessen brotherly love.

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on them that crave Thy mercy; grant Thy grace to them that need it; and make us live in such a manner that we may be worthy to enjoy Thy favour and arrive at life everlasting. Amen.

## CHAPTER X

*That Holy Communion must not lightly be omitted*

### THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



**T**HOU must often have recourse to the fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the fountain of goodness and of all purity, that thou mayest be cured of thy passions and vices, and that thou mayest acquire greater strength and vigilance against all the temptations and deceits of the devil.

The enemy, knowing the great fruit and remedy contained in holy Communion, striveth to withdraw and hinder faithful and pious souls from receiving it by

every means and on every occasion, as much as he can.

2. For it happeneth that when some persons wish to prepare themselves for holy Communion, they have to suffer more troublesome temptations from the devil.

This evil spirit, as it is written in the book of Job, cometh among the children of God, to disturb them with his wonted malice, or to render them scrupulous and perplexed; that he may lessen their fervour, or shake their faith by his aggressive arguments; and make them if possible abandon holy Communion altogether, or at least approach with coldness.

But his wiles and suggestions, however filthy and hideous, should not be heeded; and all these bad imaginations must be retorted against himself.

The wretch must be despised and scorned; and holy Communion should not be omitted on account of his assaults or of the agitation which he causeth.

3. Often also an excessive desire of obtaining devotion, as well as a certain anxiety about going to confession, proveth a hindrance.

Act according to the counsel of wise men, and put aside all perplexity and timidity, for they hinder the grace of God and destroy the devotion of the heart.

Do not omit holy Communion for some slight trouble or vexation; but go promptly

to confession, and willingly forgive others their offences against thee.

And if thou hast offended anyone, humbly beg his pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What is the advantage of postponing confession or deferring holy Communion?

Cleanse thyself as soon as thou canst, spit out the venom speedily, hasten to take the remedy, and thou shalt feel better than if thou hadst long delayed.

If thou waitest to-day for one reason, perhaps to-morrow something more serious will happen; and so thou mayest long be hindered from receiving holy Communion, and become more unfit.

Shake off thy present trouble and thy sloth as quickly as thou canst; for it availeth nought to be long in anguish, to be long in trouble, and to keep aloof from the sacraments for the sake of daily obstacles. Yea, it is very hurtful to defer holy Communion long, for this usually causeth great sluggishness.

Alas, some lukewarm and careless persons readily put off confession, and wish to defer holy Communion, lest they be obliged to keep a stricter guard over themselves.

5. Ah, how little love, and how little devotion have they, who so easily postpone holy Communion!

How happy and how pleasing to God is he who liveth in such a manner, and pre-

serveth his conscience in such purity that he would be ready and desirous to communicate every day, if he were permitted, and could do so without appearing singular!

If a person abstaineth sometimes from a motive of humility, or for some reasonable cause, he is to be praised for his reverence.

But if he hath by degrees become slothful, he must rouse himself, and do what is in his power; and the Lord will assist his desire for the sake of his good will which He chiefly considereth.

6. But when a man is reasonably prevented, he ought always to have a sincere desire and pious intention of communicating, and so he shall not be without some fruit of the Sacrament.

For every devout person may, any day and at any hour, profitably and without restriction, approach to Christ by a spiritual Communion.

And yet he must on certain days and in due season sacramentally receive the Body of his Redeemer with affectionate reverence, and rather seek the honour and glory of God than his own consolation.

But a man communicateth spiritually, and is invisibly refreshed, as often as he devoutly considereth the mysteries of Christ's Incarnation and of His sacred Passion, and is thereby inflamed with His love.

7. He that disposeth himself to communicate only when a festival is at hand, or



when he is urged by custom, shall frequently be unprepared.

Blessed is he that offereth himself as a holocaust to the Lord, as often as he celebrateth or communicateth.

Be neither too slow nor too hasty in celebrating Mass, but follow the good general custom of those with whom thou livest.

Thou must not cause annoyance or weariness to others, but keep to the common way, as thine elders have taught thee; and consider the advantage of thy neighbour more than thine own devotion or inclination.

## CHAPTER XI

*That the Body of Christ and Holy Scripture are most necessary to a Faithful Soul*

### THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



SWEETEST Lord Jesus, how great is the delight of a devout soul, feasting with Thee at Thy banquet; where no other food is served to be eaten but Thyself, the only Beloved, pleasing above all the desires of the heart!

And it would indeed be sweet to me, if in Thy presence I could shed tears with the deepest emotion, and like the pious Magdalene, wash Thy feet with my tears.

But where is this devotion, where is this copious flow of holy tears?

Truly, where Thou art present with Thy holy angels, my whole heart ought to be inflamed, and I should weep for joy.

And in this Sacrament I have Thee really present, though hidden under another form.

2. For to behold Thee in Thine own divine brightness mine eyes could not endure, neither could the whole world subsist in the splendour of the glory of Thy majesty.

It is then on account of my weakness, that Thou hidest thyself in this Sacrament.

I truly possess and adore Him whom the angels adore in heaven; but I see Him as yet only by faith, they in His own form, and without a veil.

I must rest satisfied with the light of true faith, and walk therein, till the day of eternal splendour break, and the shadows of figures retire.

But when that which is perfect cometh, the use of the sacraments shall cease; because in the heavenly glory the blessed require no sacramental medicine.

For they rejoice without end in the presence of God, *beholding His glory face to face; and being transformed from glory into the glory of the unfathomable Deity, they taste the Word of God made flesh, as He was from the beginning and remaineth for ever.*

3. When I think of these wonders, even all spiritual comfort becometh tiresome to me; for so long as I do not behold my Lord openly in His glory, I make no account of all that I see or hear in this world.

Thou art my witness, O God, that no object can comfort me, no creature can quiet me, but Thou alone, O my God, whom I desire to contemplate eternally.

That, however, is not possible, so long as I am in this mortal life.

Therefore I must dispose myself to much patience, and submit all my desires to Thee.

For Thy saints also, O Lord, who now rejoice with Thee in the kingdom of heaven, waited during their life with great faith and patience for the coming of Thy glory.

What they believed, I believe; what they expected, I expect; where they have arrived, I hope to arrive by Thy grace.

Meanwhile I shall walk in faith, strengthened by the examples of the saints.

I shall also have the holy Books for my comfort and for the mirror of my life, and above all these things Thy most holy Body for my special remedy and succour.

4. For I find that here below I stand chiefly in need of two things, without which this miserable life would be unbearable to me.

Whilst I am detained in the prison of this

body, I acknowledge that I am in want of two things, namely, food and light.

Thou hast therefore given me in my weakness Thy sacred Body for the refreshment of my soul and body; and Thou hast set Thy word as a lamp to my feet.

Without these two things I could not well live, for the word of God is the light of my soul, and Thy Sacrament is the bread of life.

These may also be called the two tables, placed on either side in the treasury of holy Church.

One is the table of the sacred altar, on which is the holy bread, that is the precious Body of Christ.

The other is the table of the divine Law, containing the holy doctrine, teaching the true faith and leading us securely even within the veil where is the holy of holies.

5. Thanks be to Thee, O Lord Jesus, light of eternal light, for the table of holy doctrine which Thou hast provided for us by Thy servants the prophets and apostles and other teachers.

Thanks be to Thee, O Creator and Redeemer of man, who, to manifest Thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper, in which Thou hast set before us as food, not the typical lamb but Thy most holy Body and Blood, delighting all the faithful with this sacred banquet and inebriating them with the cup of salvation, in which are all the pleasures of paradise;

and the holy angels feast with us, but with a happier delight.

6. Oh, how great and honourable is the office of priests, to whom it is given to consecrate with sacred words the Lord of majesty, to bless Him with their lips, to hold Him in their hands, to receive Him with their own mouth, and to distribute Him to others!

Oh, how clean ought those hands to be, how pure the mouth, how holy the body, how spotless the heart of the priest, into whom the Author of purity so often entereth!

None but holy, edifying and profitable words should proceed from the mouth of the priest who so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. His eyes, which are accustomed to behold the Body of Christ, should be guileless and chaste; his hands, which are wont to handle the Creator of heaven and earth, should be pure and lifted up to heaven.

To priests especially applieth what is said in the Law: *Be ye holy because I the Lord your God am holy.*

8. May Thy grace assist us, O almighty God, that we, who have undertaken the priestly office, may worthily and devoutly serve Thee with all purity and a good conscience.

And if we cannot conduct ourselves with such innocence of life as we ought, grant at least that we may duly bewail the evil we

have done; and that, in the spirit of humility we may form a sincere resolution to serve Thee more fervently in future.

## CHAPTER XII

*That he who is about to Communicate ought to prepare himself for Christ with great Diligence*

### THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



AM the lover of purity and the giver of all sanctity. I seek a pure heart, and there is the place of My rest.

Prepare for Me a large dining-room furnished, and *I will keep the Pasch at thy house, with My disciples.*

If thou desirest that I should come to thee, and to stay with thee, purge out the old leaven, and cleanse the habitation of thy heart.

Shut out the whole world and all the bustle of vices; sit *as a sparrow all alone on the house-top*, and recount thy transgressions in the bitterness of thy soul.

For every one that loveth prepareth for his beloved the best and fairest place, because thereby the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved is known.

2. Understand, however, that thou canst not sufficiently make this preparation by any effort of thine, though thou shouldst

prepare thyself for a whole year, and occupy thy mind with nothing else.

But it is only by My kindness and favour that thou art permitted to come to My table; as if a beggar were called to a rich man's repast, and had no other return to make for his benefits than to humble himself and thank him.

Do all thou canst, and do it diligently; not through custom or necessity; but with fear, reverence and affection, receive the Body of thy beloved Lord and God, who deigneth to come to thee.

It is I who called thee, I commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee; come and receive Me.

3. When I grant thee the grace of devotion, give thanks to thy God; not because thou art worthy of it, but because I have compassion on thee.

When thou hast no devotion, but findest thyself dry instead, have recourse to prayer; sigh and knock, and cease not till thou succeedest in obtaining some crumb or drop of saving grace.

Thou standest in need of Me, I have no need of thee.

Thou dost not come to sanctify Me, but I come to sanctify and improve thee.

Thou comest to be made holy by Me, and to be united with Me, that thou mayest receive a fresh grace, and be roused anew to amendment of life.

Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all possible care to receive thy Beloved.

4. It behoveth thee, however, not only to dispose thyself to devotion before Communion, but also carefully to continue in it after receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

And watchfulness after Communion is no less necessary than a devout preparation before.

Indeed, great vigilance after receiving it is again the best preparation to obtain a greater grace.

For if a person giveth himself up too much to outward comforts immediately after Communion, he becometh thereby inwardly very confused.

Beware of speaking much, keep thyself in retirement, and enjoy thy God; for thou hast Him whom all the world cannot take from thee.

It is to Me that thou must give thyself wholly; so that thou mayest live no longer in thyself but in Me, without any anxious care.



## CHAPTER XIII

*That a Devout Soul must heartily desire to be united with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament*

## THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



**H**OW will grant me, O Lord, that I may find Thee alone and open my whole heart to Thee and enjoy Thee as my soul desireth, and that henceforth no man may despise me nor any creature influence or regard me; but that Thou alone mayest speak to me and I to Thee, as the beloved is wont to speak to his beloved, and a friend to converse with his friend?

This I request, this I desire, that I may be wholly united to Thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things; and that by worthily communicating and frequently celebrating I may learn to relish more what is heavenly and eternal.

Ah, Lord God, when shall I be wholly united to Thee and lost in Thee, utterly forgetting myself!

Thou in me and I in Thee, and grant that we may remain thus united.

2. Verily, Thou art my beloved, chosen out of thousands, in whom my soul is pleased to dwell all the days of my life.

Verily Thou art my peacemaker, in whom is sovereign peace and true rest; out of

Thee there is nothing but labour and sorrow and endless misery.

Verily, Thou art a hidden God, and Thy counsel is not with the wicked, but Thy conversation is with the humble and guileless.

How sweet is Thy Spirit, O Lord, who, to show Thy sweetness to Thy children, vouchsafest to feed them with the most delicious bread coming down from heaven!

Verily, there is no other nation so great, that hath gods so nigh them as Thou our God art with all Thy faithful, to whom Thou givest Thyself to be eaten and enjoyed, that Thou mayest daily comfort them and raise their hearts to heaven.

3. For what other nation is so dignified as the Christian people?

Or what creature under heaven is so beloved as a devout soul, into which our Lord entereth that He may feed it with His glorious Body?

O ineffable grace, O wondrous condescension, O boundless love bestowed only on man!

But what shall I render to the Lord for this grace, for such singular love?

Nothing that I can give will be more acceptable than that I offer my heart wholly to my God, and join it closely to Him.

Then shall all that is within me rejoice, when my soul shall be perfectly united with God.

Then He will say to me: If thou wilt be

with Me, I will be with thee. And I shall answer Him: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to abide with me; I shall gladly remain with Thee. This is all my desire, that my heart may be united with Thee.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *Of the Ardent Desire of some Pious Souls for the Body of Christ*

#### THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



*H, how great is the abundance  
of Thy sweetness, O Lord,  
which Thou hast hidden for  
them that fear Thee!*

At the remembrance of some pious persons who approached Thy Sacrament, O Lord, with the greatest devotion and fervour, I am often confounded and ashamed within myself, because I draw near to Thine altar and the table of holy Communion with such dullness and coldness.

Because I remain so dry and without tenderness of heart; because I am not wholly inflamed in Thy presence, O my God, and not so strongly attracted and moved as many devout souls have been, who, owing to their ardent desire for holy Communion and the tender affection of their heart, could not refrain from weeping; but with the mouth both of soul and body they fervently longed

for Thee, O God, who art a living fountain, being unable to allay or satisfy their hunger otherwise than by receiving Thy sacred Body with the greatest joy and spiritual eagerness.

2. Oh, the truly ardent faith of these men, which is a sure sign of Thy sacred presence!

For they indeed know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so strongly within them with the love of Jesus who is walking with them.

Such affection and devotion, such ardent love and fervour are often far from me.

Be merciful unto me, O good, sweet and gracious Jesus, and grant to me, Thy poor suppliant, that I may at least sometimes feel a little of the heartfelt affection of Thy love in holy Communion; that my faith may become stronger, that my hope in Thy goodness may increase, and that my charity being once perfectly kindled, and having tasted the sweetness of the heavenly manna, may never fail.

3. And Thy mercy is also able to grant me this grace which I desire, and to visit me kindly with the spirit of fervour when the day of Thy good pleasure shall come.

For although I am not inflamed with the ardent desire of Thy singularly pious servants, yet by Thy grace I long for that same great burning desire, praying and wishing to become a partaker with all such

fervent lovers of Thee and to be numbered in their holy company.

## CHAPTER XV

*That the Grace of Devotion is obtained by Humility and Self-denial*

THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



**T**HOU oughtest to seek the grace of devotion earnestly, to ask it longingly, to wait for it patiently and confidently, to receive it thankfully, to keep it humbly, to co-operate with it diligently, and to commit to God the time and manner of this heavenly visitation till it come.

Thou must humble thyself especially when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion; yet thou shouldst not be greatly discouraged nor grieve immoderately.

God often giveth in one short moment what He hath for a long time refused; He giveth sometimes in the end what He hath deferred to grant at the beginning of prayer.

2. If grace were always promptly given and were present at will, weak man could not well bear it.

Therefore the grace of devotion must be awaited with good hope and humble patience. Yet impute it to thyself and to thy sins when it is not granted, or unaccountably withdrawn.

It is sometimes but a trifle that retardeth or hideth grace; if indeed that should be called a trifle, and not rather a serious obstacle which hindereth so great a good. And if thou removest this impediment, be it little or great, and thou perfectly overcome it, thy request shall be granted.

3. For **■** soon as thou resignest thyself to God with thy whole heart, and seekest not this or that according to thine own whim or wish, but committest thyself wholly to Him, thou shalt find thyself united with Him and at rest; for nothing will be so palatable and delightful to thee as the good pleasure of the divine will.

Whosoever, therefore, will direct his mind and will in all simplicity to God, empty himself of all inordinate love or aversion for any created thing, he shall be very well prepared to obtain grace, and deserve the gift of devotion.

For there the Lord giveth His blessing where He findeth empty vessels.

And the more perfectly **■** man forsaketh earthly things, and dieth to himself by self-contempt, the more speedily grace cometh, the more plentifully it entereth and the higher it lifteth up the unfettered heart.

4. Then shall he see and abound, and his heart shall wonder and be enlarged within him, because the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath placed himself wholly into His hands for ever.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who seeketh God with his whole heart and taketh not his soul in vain.

When such a man receiveth the Holy Eucharist, he deserveth the great grace of union with God, because he intendeth not his own devotion and consolation, but regardeth the honour and glory of God above all piety and comfort.

## CHAPTER XVI

*That we must recommend our Necessities to Christ, and crave His Grace*

THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



**M**OST sweet and loving Lord, whom I now desire devoutly to receive, Thou knowest my weakness, and the want I suffer; in how many evils and vices I lie entangled; how often I am burdened, tempted, troubled and sullen.

To Thee I come for a remedy, to Thee I pray for comfort and relief.

I speak to Thee who knowest all things, to whom all my thoughts are visible, and who alone canst perfectly comfort and help me.

Thou knowest what graces I stand most in need of, and how poor I am in virtue.

2. Behold, I appear before Thee needy and destitute, requesting grace and imploring mercy.

Refresh thy hungry suppliant, inflame my coldness with the fire of Thy love, enlighten my blindness with the splendour of Thy presence.

Turn all earthly joys for me into bitterness, all difficulties and troubles into patience, all worldly and created things into scorn and oblivion.

Raise my heart to Thee in heaven, and suffer me not to stray on earth.

Do Thou alone be pleasing to me, from henceforth and for ever; for Thou alone art my meat and drink, my love and my joy, my delight and all my good.

3. Oh, that by Thy presence Thou wouldst wholly inflame me, consume me and transform me into Thyself, that I may become one spirit with Thee by the grace of inward union and the fusion of ardent love!

Do not let me depart from Thee hungry and thirsty, but deal mercifully with me, as Thou hast often done in a marvellous manner with Thy saints.

What wonder if I should be wholly inflamed by Thee, and lost within myself since Thou art a fire always burning and never failing, a love purifying the heart, and enlightening the understanding?



## CHAPTER XVII

*Of an ardent Love and a fervent Desire to receive Christ*

## THE VOICE OF THE DISCIPLE



WITH the greatest devotion and burning love, with all the affection and fervour of my heart, I desire to receive Thee, O Lord, as many saints and pious persons who pleased Thee most by holiness of life and were most ardent in their devotion have longed for Thee when they communicated.

O my God, everlasting love, all my good, endless happiness, I wish to receive Thee, with the most ardent desire and deepest reverence which any of the saints ever had or could experience.

2. And although I am unworthy to have all those sentiments of devotion, yet I offer Thee the entire affection of my heart, as if I alone possessed all those most pleasing and fervent longings.

Yea, and all that a pious mind can conceive and desire, I give and offer Thee, with the deepest veneration and sincerest willingness.

I wish to keep nothing for myself, but I desire to sacrifice myself and all I have freely and most readily to Thee.

O Lord my God, my Creator and my Redeemer, I wish to receive Thee this day with such longing, reverence, praise and honour, with such gratitude, esteem and love, with such faith, hope and purity, as Thy most holy Mother, the glorious Virgin Mary received and desired Thee, when she humbly and devoutly replied to the angel who brought the glad tidings of the mystery of the Incarnation: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.*

3. And as Thy blessed forerunner, the most distinguished among the saints, John the Baptist, leaped with gladness in Thy presence, in the joy of the Holy Ghost, when he was still shut up in his mother's womb. And afterwards, beholding Jesus walking among men, humbled himself deeply, and said with pious affection: *The friend of the Bridegroom, who standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth with joy because of the Bridegroom's voice;* so I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer myself to Thee with my whole heart.

Wherefore I also offer and present to Thee the joyful songs, the ardent affections, the transports of mind, the supernatural illuminations, and the heavenly visions of all devout souls, with all the power and praise that ever was or shall be rendered to Thee by all creatures in heaven and on earth, for myself and all who are recommended to

my prayers; that by them all Thou mayest be duly honoured and for ever glorified.

4. Accept my vows, O Lord my God, and my desires of infinite praise and endless blessing, which, according to the extent of Thine ineffable greatness, are rightly due to Thee.

These I render thee, and wish to render day by day and every moment of time; and, with my prayers and desires, I invite and entreat all the heavenly spirits and all Thy faithful to thank and praise Thee with me.

5. May all peoples, tribes and tongues extol Thee; and may they glorify Thy holy and sweet name with supreme rejoicing and ardent devotion.

And may all who reverently and devoutly celebrate holy Mass, and with perfect faith receive Thy most august Sacrament, deserve to find grace and mercy with Thee and earnestly pray for me, a sinner.

And when they shall have obtained the desired devotion and delightful union, and shall depart from Thy holy heavenly table well comforted and wonderfully refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember me, ■  
poor sinner.

## CHAPTER XVIII

*That a Man should not be a curious Searcher into this Sacrament, but a humble Follower of Christ, submitting his Reason to holy Faith*

## THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED



**T**HOU must beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this sublime mystery, if thou wouldst not sink into the depths of doubt.

*He that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory.* God is able to operate more than man can understand.

A pious and humble inquiry into the truth is allowable, when a man is ever willing to be taught, and closely followeth the sound doctrine of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicity which avoideth the difficult ways of subtle questions and walketh in the plain and firm path of God's commandments.

Many have lost their devotion when they wanted to search into sublime truths.

It is faith that is required of thee, and a good life; not loftiness of intellect or deep knowledge of the mysteries of God.

If thou canst not grasp or understand things that are beneath thee, how wilt thou comprehend those which are above thee?

Be subject to God and humbly yield thy

reason to faith; and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in such measure as shall be profitable and necessary for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted as regards their faith in the Blessed Sacrament; this, however, is not to be attributed to them, but rather to the enemy.

Do not trouble, do not dispute with thy thoughts, nor reply to the doubts suggested by the devil; but believe the word of God, believe his saints and prophets, and the wicked enemy will fly from thee.

It is often very profitable that a servant of God should suffer such temptations.

For the devil attacketh not unbelievers and sinners, whom he already safely holdeth, but he troubleth and harasseth the pious faithful in many ways.

4. Approach then with a sincere and unwavering faith and receive the Blessed Sacrament with humble reverence, and safely commit to almighty God what thou canst not understand.

God doth not deceive thee; but he is deceived who trusteth too much to himself.

God walketh with the guileless, He revealeth Himself to the humble, He giveth insight to little ones, He openeth the understanding of pure minds, and He hideth His grace from the curious and the proud.

Human reason is weak and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and natural inquiry ought to follow faith, not to precede or check it.

For faith and love do here especially excel, and operate in hidden ways in this most holy and august Sacrament.

God, who is eternal and immense and whose power is infinite, doeth great and unsearchable things in heaven and on earth; and it is not possible to search out His marvellous works.

If the works of God were such that they might easily be understood by human reason, they could not be called wonderful or ineffable.

# Book the Fourth Of Inward Consolation

## CHAPTER I

*How Christ speaketh Inwardly to the Faithful  
Soul*



**L** *WILL* hear what the Lord  
God will speak in me.

Blessed is the soul that hear-  
eth the Lord inwardly  
speaking, and receiveth a  
word of comfort from His  
lips.

Blessed are the ears that catch at least  
a faint sound of the divine whisper, and  
hear nothing of the whisperings of the  
world.

Blessed indeed are the ears that hearken  
not to the voice which soundeth without,  
but to Truth itself teaching within.

Blessed are the eyes that are shut to out-  
ward and open to inward objects.

Blessed are they who consider inward  
things and strive to prepare themselves  
more and more, by daily exercises, to un-  
derstand heavenly secrets.

Blessed are they who desire to live for God,  
and who rid themselves of all worldly  
hindrances.

Attend to this, O my soul, and close the  
gates of the senses, that thou mayest hear  
what the Lord thy God will speak in thee.

2. Thus saith thy Beloved: I am thy Salvation, thy Peace and thy Life.

Abide with Me, and thou shalt find peace.

Abandon all that is transitory, seek what is eternal.

What are all temporal things but decoys? And what can all creatures avail thee if thou art forsaken by the Creator?

Having therefore renounced all things, render thyself pleasing and faithful to thy Creator that thou mayest obtain true happiness.

## CHAPTER II

*That Truth speaketh inwardly, without the noise of Words*



**PEAK**, Lord, for Thy servant heareth! I am Thy servant: give me understanding that I may know Thy testimonies.

Incline my heart to the words of Thy mouth; let

Thy speech distil as the dew.

The children of Israel said formerly to Moses: *Speak thou to us and we will hear; let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die.*

Not so, Lord, not so do I pray; but rather with the prophet Samuel, I humbly and longingly entreat: Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.

Let not Moses speak to me, nor one of the



prophets: but do Thou rather speak, O Lord God, inspirer and enlightener of all the prophets; for Thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me; but they without Thee can teach me nothing.

2. They can, indeed, pronounce the words, but they do not impart the spirit.

They speak beautifully; but if Thou art silent, they do not inflame the heart.

They teach the letter; but Thou openest the understanding.

They publish mysteries; but Thou revealest the meaning of hidden things.

They proclaim the commandments; but Thou helpst us to keep them.

They point out the way; but Thou givest strength to walk in it.

They act only from without; but Thou instructest and enlightenest the heart.

They water outwardly; but Thou givest fruitfulness.

They say the words aloud; but Thou impartest discernment to the hearing.

3. Let then not Moses speak to me, but speak Thou, O Lord, my God, Eternal Truth, lest perhaps I die and bring forth no fruit, if I am only admonished outwardly and not inwardly inflamed; lest it turn to my condemnation that I have heard the word, and not practised it; that I have known it, and not loved it; that I have believed it and not observed it.

Speak, then, O Lord, for Thy servant

heareth. *Thou hast indeed the words of eternal life.*

Speak to me for the comfort of my soul, and the amendment of my whole life, and also for Thine honour and glory, and everlasting praise.

### CHAPTER III

*That the Words of God are to be heard with Humility, and that many do not reflect on them*



**Y** son, hear My words, words most sweet, surpassing all the learning of the philosophers and wise men of this world. *My words are spirit and life*, and not to be understood in a human sense.

They are not to be twisted to the vain satisfaction of men, but they must be heard in silence, and received with deep humility and great longing.

2. And I said: Blessed is the man whom Thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach him out of Thy law: that Thou mayest give him rest from the evil days and that he be not desolate on earth.

3. I, saith the Lord, taught the prophets from the beginning, and even now I cease not speaking to all; but many are deaf and insensible to my voice.

Many listen more willingly to the world

than to God, and yield more readily to the lusts of the flesh than to the good pleasure of God.

The world promiseth temporal and trifling gains, and is served with great eagerness; I promise sovereign and eternal goods, and the hearts of mortals remain unmoved.

Who serveth Me and obeyeth Me in all things as zealously as people serve the world and its lords?

Be ashamed, O Sidon, saith the sea; and if thou wantest to know the reason listen why.

For a small living men run a long way, for eternal life many will scarcely once lift a foot from the ground.

A petty salary is sought after; over a single coin there is sometimes a disgraceful quarrel; for a vain trinket and a small promise men do not hesitate to exert themselves day and night.

4. But, oh shame! for an unchangeable good, for a priceless reward, for the supreme honour and a never-ending glory they grudge the least fatigue.

Blush then, thou slothful and querulous servant, because they do more for their perdition, than thou dost for life eternal.

They are more delighted with falsehood, than thou art with the truth.

And yet their hope often faileth them, whereas My promise deceiveth no one,

and letteth none that trusteth in Me depart empty.

What I have promised, I will give; what I have said, I will accomplish; provided a man remain faithful to My love even to the end.

I reward all the righteous, and vigorously try all My devout servants.

5. Write My words in thy heart, and consider them diligently, for they will be very needful in time of temptation.

What thou understandest not whilst reading, thou shalt know in the day of visitation.

In two ways I am wont to visit Mine elect, namely, by temptation and by consolation.

And I daily teach them two lessons, one by blaming their sins, the other by encouraging them to advance in virtue.

*He that hath My words and despiseth them, hath One that shall judge him in the last day.*

### A Prayer for obtaining the Grace of Devotion

6. O Lord my God, Thou art all my good. And who am I that I should dare to speak to Thee?

I am Thy most needy servant, and a contemptible worm, much poorer and meaner than I know or can say.

Yet remember, O Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing.

Thou alone art Good, Just and Holy; Thou canst do all things, Thou givest all things,

Thou fillest all things; only the sinner Thou leavest empty.

Remember Thy tender mercies, and fill my heart with Thy grace, Thou who wilt not that Thy works should be idle!

7. How could I endure this miserable life, unless strengthened by Thy mercy and grace?

Turn not away Thy face from me, delay not Thy visit, withdraw not Thy consolation, lest my soul become as earth without water unto Thee.

O Lord, teach me to do Thy will, teach me to walk worthily and humbly before Thee; for Thou art my wisdom, who knowest me in truth, and didst know me before the world was made, and before I was born in the world.

## CHAPTER IV

*That we ought to walk in Truth and Humility before God*



SON, walk before Me in truth, and ever seek Me in the simplicity of thy heart.

He that walketh before Me in truth shall be safe from evil assaults, and the truth shall deliver him from deceivers and from the slanders of the wicked.

If the truth maketh thee free, thou shalt be

free indeed, and thou shalt make no account of the vain words of men.

2. Lord, what Thou sayest is true; pray let it be so with me. Let Thy truth teach me, guard me, and keep me to the happy end.

Let it deliver me from all bad desires and inordinate affections, and I shall walk with Thee in great freedom of heart.

3. I, saith the Truth, will teach thee what is right and pleasing in my sight.

Remember thy sins with great displeasure and grief; and never entertain a high opinion of thyself on account of thy good works.

Verily thou art a sinner, and subject to many passions, and entangled in them.

Of thyself thou always driftest to nothingness; thou easily fallest, thou art quickly overcome, thou art soon troubled, and readily growest slack.

Thou hast nothing in which thou canst glory, but many reasons to humble thyself; for thou art much weaker than thou canst understand.

4. Let therefore nothing that thou doest appear great to thee.

Let nothing seem noble to thee, nothing precious and admirable, nothing worthy of esteem, nothing lofty, nothing truly praiseworthy and desirable but that which is eternal.

Let the Eternal Truth please thee above all things; and let thine own utter nothingness ever displease thee.

Thou shouldst fear, blame and avoid nothing so much as thy vices and sins, which ought to distress thee more than any earthly loss.

Some do not walk sincerely before Me, but, moved by a certain inquisitiveness and haughtiness, they wish to know My secrets, and to understand the mysteries of God, whilst they neglect themselves and their salvation.

These often fall into great temptations and sins by reason of their pride and curiosity, because I withstand them.

5. Fear the judgements of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. And do not discuss the works of the Most High, but consider thy wickedness, in how many ways thou hast sinned, and how much good thou hast neglected.

Some place their devotion only in books, others in pictures, others again in outward signs and figures.

Some have Me often on their lips, but seldom in their hearts.

There are others who, enlightened in mind and purified in affection, ever long for things eternal; they reluctantly hear of earthly things, and regretfully attend to the wants of nature; and these perceive what the Spirit of truth speaketh in them.

For He teacheth them to despise earthly, and love heavenly things; to scorn the world, and desire heaven all day and night.

## CHAPTER V

*Of the Wonderful Effect of Divine Love*

BLESS Thee, O Heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, for having vouchsafed to remember me, a poor sinner.

O Father of mercies and God of all consolation, I give Thee thanks for refreshing me sometimes with Thy comfort, though I am unworthy of all consolation.

I always bless and glorify Thee, with Thine only-begotten Son, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, for ever and ever.

Ah, Lord God, holy Lover of my soul, when Thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me shall rejoice.

Thou art my glory and the joy of my heart. Thou art my hope and my refuge in the day of my trouble.

2. But **■** I am still weak in love, and imperfect in virtue, I stand in need of being strengthened and consoled by Thee; visit me, therefore, often, and instruct me by Thy holy admonitions.

Free me from my evil passions, and cure my heart of all inordinate affections: that being inwardly healed and well purified, I may become worthy to love Thee, courageous to suffer, steadfast to persevere.

3. The love of Thee is **■** a great thing, a great



good indeed; which alone lighteneth all that is burdensome, and beareth all wrongs aright.

For it carrieth a burden without weight, and maketh all that is bitter sweet and tasty.

The love of Jesus is noble: it spurreth a man on to do great works, and urgeth him to desire always what is more perfect.

The love of God wisheth to be on high, and not to be hampered by anything below.

The love of God wisheth to be free, and disengaged from all worldly desires, lest its inward vision be dimmed; lest it become distracted by the hope of some temporal gain or discouraged by some loss.

There is nothing sweeter, nothing stronger, nothing loftier, nothing greater, nothing happier, nothing richer nor better in heaven and on earth than the love of God, for love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God above all creatures.

4. He that loveth God flieth, runneth and rejoiceth; he is free and unhindered.

He giveth all for all, and hath all in all; because he resteth above all in the only Sovereign Good, from which all good floweth and proceedeth.

He regardeth not the gifts, but looketh above all good gifts to the Giver.

Love often knoweth no measure, but is inflamed beyond all measure.

Love feeleth no burden, counteth no labour; it desireth to do more than it is able;

it complaineth not as if the task were impossible, because it believeth that it can, and may do, all things.

Hence it is able to undertake all, and it be-  
ginneth and completeth many great works,  
when a man that loveth not would be faint  
and prostrated.

5. Love watcheth, and slumbering sleepeth  
not.

Though fatigued, it is not weary; though  
hampered, is not distressed; though fright-  
ened, is not dismayed; but like a vivid flame  
and a burning torch it rusheth upwards,  
and passeth safely.

He that loveth God knoweth the cry of  
this voice.

For a loud cry in the ears of God is this  
ardent affection of the soul, which saith:  
“My God, my love, Thou art all mine,  
and I am all Thine.”

6. Expand Thou me in Thy love, that, with  
the inward palate of my heart, I may taste  
how sweet it is to love Thee, and to melt  
and swim in Thy love.

Let me be captivated by Thy love, rising  
above myself in sheer fervour and amaze-  
ment.

Let me sing the canticle of love; let me  
follow Thee, my Beloved, on high; let my  
soul, exulting with love, spend itself in Thy  
praise.

Let me love Thee more than myself, and  
myself only for Thee; and in Thee all them

that truly love Thee, as the law of love commandeth, which springeth from Thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere, dutiful, cheerful and pleasing; it is courageous, patient, faithful, prudent, persevering, manly and never self-seeking.

For as soon as a man seeketh himself, he swerveth from Thy love.

Love is cautious, humble and upright; not effeminate, not fickle nor concerned with vain things; it is sober, chaste, firm, quiet and guarded in all the senses.

Love is subject and obedient to superiors, in its own eyes mean and contemptible, devout and grateful to God, ever trusting and hoping in Him, even when He granteth no sensible sweetness; for without pain there is no living in love.

8. He that is not ready to suffer all things and to be at the disposal of His Beloved deserveth not to be called a lover.

It behoveth a lover to accept willingly all that is hard and bitter for the sake of his Beloved, and not to swerve from Him on account of untoward events.

## CHAPTER VI

*How a True Lover is Tried*

ON, thou art not yet a brave and wise lover.

Why, Lord?

Because for a slight opposition thou abandonest thine undertakings, and seekest consolation too eagerly.

A brave lover remaineth firm in temptation, and giveth no credit to the crafty instigations of the enemy; as I please Him in prosperity, so I displease Him not in adversity.

A wise lover regardeth not so much the lover's gift as the giver's love.

He appreciateth the kindness more than the gift; and esteemeth all the gifts less than his beloved.

A noble lover resteth not in My gift, but in Me above every gift.

2. All is not lost, if sometimes thou dost not feel so much devotion to Me or to My saints as thou wouldst wish.

The devout and tender feeling which thou experiencest at times is the effect of the grace thou then receivest, and a certain foretaste of the heavenly joys, on which thou must not depend too much, for it cometh and goeth.

But to fight against the evil thoughts which occur to thy mind, and to scorn the prompt-

ings of the devil, is a mark of virtue and of great merit.

3. Be therefore not disturbed by any improper suggestions, no matter what their object may be.

Be firm in thy resolution, and direct thine intention towards God.

If sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest to the wonted frivolities of thy heart, therein is no illusion of the enemy.

For thou reluctantly sufferest these things, instead of causing them; and so long as they displease thee and thou resistest, it is a gain for thee and not a loss.

4. Know that the old enemy would fain entirely hinder thy good desires, and make thee give up all practices of devotion; such as the veneration of the saints, the pious meditation on My passion, the profitable remembrance of thy sins, the guard over thine own heart, and the firm purpose of advancing in virtue.

He suggesteth many evil thoughts to weary and frighten thee, that so he may withdraw thee from prayer and spiritual reading.

An humble confession displeaseth him, and he would, if possible, make thee abandon holy Communion.

Do not believe him nor heed him, though he should often lay snares to deceive thee.

When he importuneth thee with bad and impure thoughts, charge him with them.

Say to him: Begone, unclean spirit, be ashamed, thou wretch, thou must be filthy indeed to whisper such things into mine ears.

Depart from me, most wicked deceiver, thou shalt have no part with me whatever; but Jesus will be with me as a strong warrior, and thou shalt be confounded.

I would rather die and suffer any torment than consent to thee.

Hold thy peace and be silent; I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldst be even more troublesome to me.

*The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?*

*If armies in camp should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. The Lord is my Helper and my Redeemer.*

5. Fight as a good soldier; and if sometimes thou fallest through frailty, arm thyself with greater courage than before, trusting that I will give thee a greater grace; and beware particularly of self-complacency and pride.

This causeth many to fall into error, and sometimes to be struck with almost incurable blindness.

Let the downfall of the proud, who foolishly trusted in themselves, teach thee caution and constant humility.

## CHAPTER VII

*That Grace must be concealed under the safeguard of Humility*



ON, it is profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion, and not to be puffed up with it, nor to speak much of it, nor to make much account of it; but to despise thyself the more, and fear as if this favour had been bestowed on one unworthy of it.

Thou shouldst not be too much attached to this feeling of devotion, which may soon be changed to the contrary.

When thou enjoyest this grace, reflect how wretched and poor thou art without it.

Besides, do not think that thy progress in the spiritual life consisteth only in enjoying the grace of consolation, but also in bearing its withdrawal with humility, resignation and patience; provided thou dost not then flag in prayer, and in no wise omittest the other exercises which thou art accustomed to perform; but that thou willingly doest what lieth in thy power, as best thou canst and knowest; and that the dryness and anxiety of mind which thou experiencest make thee in no wise neglect thyself.

2. For there are many who, when all doth not turn out well with them, become immediately impatient or inactive.

Now the way of man is not always in his own power, but it belongeth to God to give grace and comfort when He will, and as much as He will, and to whom He will, as it pleaseth Him, and no more.

Some heedless persons have done themselves harm for the sake of the grace of devotion, because they wanted to do more than they could; instead of considering their utter helplessness they followed the desires of their heart rather than the dictates of reason.

And because they attempted more than was pleasing to God, they soon lost His grace.

They who had built themselves a nest in heaven were left poor and wretched behind, that being humbled and impoverished they might learn not to fly with their own wings but to trust to My pinions.

They that are as yet fresh and inexperienced in the way of the Lord may easily be deceived and go astray, unless they will be guided by the advice of wiser men.

3. And if they will rather follow their own opinion than trust to others who have more experience, the issue may be perilous, should they refuse to abandon their own judgment.

They that are wise in their own eyes seldom suffer themselves humbly to be guided by others.

A limited knowledge with humility and a



slender capacity is better than great treasures of learning with vain complacency. It is better for thee to have but little, than to have much on which thou mightest pride thyself.

He acteth not very prudently who giveth himself up wholly to joy when he experienceth the grace of devotion, forgetting his former poverty and the salutary fear of the Lord, which dreadeth the loss of grace received.

Neither is he truly wise who, in time of adversity and trouble, becometh too despondent, and thinketh and judgeth of Me with less confidence than he ought.

4. He who appeareth very fearless in time of peace shall often find himself very disheartened and timid in time of war.

If thou couldst always remain humble and little in thine own estimation, and direct and govern thy mind properly, thou wouldst not fall so soon into danger and sin.

It is a good advice that, when thou experiencest fervour of spirit, thou shouldst consider what may happen when that light shall depart.

And when this cometh to pass, remember that the light may return again, and that for thy warning and for My glory, I have temporarily withdrawn it.

5. Such a trial is often more profitable to thee than if thou didst always succeed according to thy wish.

For a man's merits must not be gauged by considering if he hath many visions or consolations, or if he is well versed in Holy Scripture, or appointed to an important office.

But if he is grounded in true humility and filled with divine charity; if he always seeketh wholly and solely the glory of God; if he maketh no account of himself and truly despiseth himself, and if he is also better pleased when he is slighted and humbled by others than when he is honoured by them.

## CHAPTER VIII

*That we must consider ourselves worthless in the Sight of God*



*I* will speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes. If I imagine that I am more than this, behold, Thou withstandest me; and my sins bear true witness, and I cannot gainsay it.

But if I disregard and despise myself, and abandon all self-esteem, and account myself mere dust, as I am, then Thy grace will be favourable to me, and Thy light will be near to my heart; and all regard of myself, however little it may be, shall be sunk into the abyss of my nothingness and perish for ever.

There Thou showest me my own self: what

I am, what I have been, and what I am come to; for *I am nothing, and I knew not.*

If I am left to myself, behold I am nothing but mere weakness; if, however, Thou shouldst suddenly cast Thine eyes upon me, I forthwith become strong, and am filled with a new joy.

And it is a great marvel that I, who, by mine own weight always sink downwards, am thus suddenly cheered, and so kindly embraced by Thee.

2. This is the work of Thy love, which generously visiteth me, and assisteth me in my numerous needs; which also preserveth me from great dangers, and, to speak truly, delivereth me from innumerable evils.

For by wrongly loving myself I lost myself; but when I sought only Thee, and purely loved Thee, I found both myself and Thee; and for the love of Thee I despised myself the more.

O most sweet Lord, Thou favourest me indeed beyond all merit and beyond all I dare hope or request.

3. Be Thou blessed, O my God; for though I am unworthy of the least favour, yet Thy generosity and Thine infinite goodness never cease to confer benefits even on those that are ungrateful, and have strayed far from Thee.

Convert us to Thee, that we may be grateful, humble and devout; for Thou

art our Salvation, our Courage and our Strength.

## CHAPTER IX

*That all things are to be referred to God as to their Last End*



**M**ON, I must be thy chief and last end if thou desirest to be truly happy.

This intention will purify thine affection, which is but too often wrongly lavished on thyself and creatures.

For if thou seekest thyself in anything, thou presently growest within thyself faint and dry.

Thou must therefore refer all things principally to Me, for it is I who have given thee all.

Consider everything as flowing from the Sovereign good; and therefore all things are to be referred to Me as to their origin.

2. From Me both little and great, rich and poor draw the water of life as from a living fountain; and they who willingly and freely serve Me shall receive grace for grace.

But he that would glory in anything besides Me, or delight in any good of his own, shall not be established in true joy, nor enlarged in heart; but in many ways he shall be hindered and straitened.

Thou must, therefore, not ascribe any good to thyself, nor attribute virtue to any man; but refer all to God, without whom man hath nothing.

I have given thee all, all I must have back; and I strictly require a return of thanks.

3. This is the truth whereby vainglory is put to flight.

And when heavenly grace and true charity enter the soul, there remaineth no envy nor hardness of heart nor self-love.

For divine charity overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the soul.

If thou art truly wise, thou wilt rejoice only in Me, thou wilt hope only in Me; for *none is good but God alone*, who is above all to be praised and in all to be blessed.

## CHAPTER X

*That when we have despised the World it is sweet to serve God*



NOW I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent; I will say in the hearing of my God, my Lord and my King, who is on high: *Oh, how great is the abundance of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidde<sup>n</sup> for them that fear Thee!*

But what art Thou to those who love Thee?

What to those who serve Thee with their whole heart?

Truly inexpressible is the sweetness of Thy contemplation, which Thou grantest to them that love Thee.

In this Thou hast chiefly shown me the sweetness of Thy love, that, when I was not, Thou madest me; and when I strayed far from Thee, Thou broughtest me back, that I might serve Thee; and Thou hast commanded me to love Thee.

2. O Fount of Love unceasing, what shall I say of Thee?

How could I forget Thee, who hast condescended to remember me, even when I had fallen away and perished?

Beyond all hope Thou hast shown mercy to Thy servant; and beyond all merit Thou hast bestowed on him Thy grace and friendship.

What return shall I make Thee for this favour? For it is not granted to everyone to leave all things, to renounce the world and enter the religious state.

Am I doing much for Thee by serving Thee, whom every creature is bound to serve?

Oh, no! It ought not to seem much to me that I should serve Thee; but rather this appeareth great and surprising to me, that Thou vouchsafest to admit into Thy service so poor and worthless a creature as I am, and to associate me with Thy beloved servants.

3. Behold, all things I have and wherewith I serve Thee are Thine.

And yet, contrariwise, Thou rather servest me than I Thee.

Lo! heaven and earth, which Thou hast created for the service of man, are at Thy command, and daily do whatever Thou hast enjoined them.

And this is yet little, for Thou hast also appointed the angels to minister to man.

But what by far surpasseth all, is that Thou hast Thyself condescended to serve man, and that Thou hast promised to give him Thine own self.

4. What shall I render Thee for all these thousands of favours? Oh, that I might serve Thee all the days of my life!

Oh, that I were able to serve Thee worthily, even for one day!

Thou art indeed worthy of all service, all honour and eternal praise.

Truly Thou art my Lord, and I am Thy poor servant, who am bound to serve Thee with all my strength, and should never grow weary in Thy praise.

This I wish, this I desire; do Thou kindly supply what is wanting in me.

5. It is a great honour, a great glory to serve Thee and to despise all things for Thy sake.

For they who freely devote themselves to Thy most holy service shall obtain a great grace.

They who for the love of Thee renounce all carnal pleasures shall find the sweetest consolation of the Holy Ghost.

They who for Thy Name's sake walk in the narrow path and renounce all care for worldly things shall enjoy great freedom of heart.

6. O agreeable and delightful service of God, by which a man becometh truly free and holy!

O sacred state of religious bondage, which maketh men similar to the angels, pleasing to God, terrible to the devils, commendable to all the faithful!

O eligible and ever-desirable service of God, by which we gain the Sovereign Good, and earn a never-ending joy!

## CHAPTER XI

*That we must examine and regulate the Desires of our Heart*



**O**N, thou hast still to study many things, which thou hast not yet well learned. What are these, Lord? That thou must conform thy desire wholly to My good pleasure; and that thou shouldst not be a lover of thyself, but an eager follower of My will.

Thy desires often inflame thee and strongly excite thee; but examine whether thou art



striving for Mine honour, or rather for thine own advantage.

If it is for Me thou workest, thou wilt be content, no matter whether I want thee to succeed or not; but if there lurketh in thee any self-seeking, behold this is what hindereth and burdeneth thee.

2. Beware therefore of relying too much on any desire thou mayest have conceived without consulting Me, lest perhaps afterwards thou become discontented or displeased with that which at first pleased thee, and which thou didst consider excellent.

For every impulse which appeareth good must not immediately be followed; nor must every impression which thou dislikest at once be rejected.

It is sometimes expedient to use restraint, even in good projects and desires, lest thy mind become distracted by too much application; or lest thou be a cause of disedification to thy brethren through want of regularity; or also lest thou be suddenly troubled and discouraged by the opposition of others.

3. Sometimes, however, it behoveth thee to use violence, and bravely to resist thy sensual appetite, and take no notice of what the flesh would, or would not; but rather strive to subject it, even reluctantly, to the spirit.

And it must be chastised and forced into subjection, until it is ready for all things, and hath learned to be satisfied with little,

to be pleased with what is plain, and not to complain of any inconvenience.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Of the Practice of Patience, and of Struggling against our Evil Inclinations*



LORD GOD, I perceive that patience is very necessary for me, because many trials occur in this life.

For though I earnestly strive after peace, my life cannot be without conflict

and sorrow.

2. So it is, my son. However, I wish that thou wouldst not seek thy peace in being free from temptation, or feeling no difficulty.

But thou shouldst also think that thou hast found peace, when thou art tormented by divers troubles, and tried by many adversities.

3. If thou sayest that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire of purgatory?

Of two evils the lesser should always be chosen.

Learn therefore to bear the present evils patiently for God's sake, that thou mayest escape the everlasting punishments to come.

Dost thou think that people in the world have little or nothing to suffer?

Thou wilt not find it so, even among the most fashionable.

But, thou sayest, they have many gratifications, and do **as** they like: and hence they make little account of their troubles.

4. Be it so: suppose they have all they desire; how long, thinkest thou, will this last?

Behold, they that abound in the world shall vanish like smoke, and there shall be no memory of their past joys.

But even during life they cannot have these pleasures without bitterness, weariness and fear.

For in the very things in which they seek delight, they often find the penalty of sorrow.

It happeneth rightly to them, that as they inordinately seek and taste their pleasures, they should not enjoy them without shame and grief.

Oh, how short, how deceitful, how inordinate, how disgraceful are all worldly delights!

Yet, through excess and blindness, men do not understand this; but, like dumb beasts, for a trivial pleasure in this corruptible life, they incur the death of the soul.

Thou therefore, my son, *go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thine own will. Delight in the Lord, and He will give thee the requests of thy heart.*

5. For if thou wishest to experience true delight, and to be plenteously comforted by Me, behold, in the contempt of all earthly

things, and in the entire separation from all worldly pleasures, shall be thy blessing; and abundant consolation shall be given thee.

And the more thou withdrawest thyself from all comfort of creatures, so much the sweeter and stronger will be the consolation thou findest in Me.

But at first thou shalt not attain to this without some sadness, nor without exertion in the struggle.

Thine own bad habit will resist, but it will be overcome by a better practice.

The flesh will repine, but it will be bridled by the fervour of the spirit.

The old serpent will goad and provoke thee, but by prayer he shall be put to flight; moreover by useful employment his approach shall be barred.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### *Of the Obedience of an humble Subject after the Example of Jesus Christ*



ON, he that striveth to withdraw himself from obedience withdraweth himself from grace; and he that keepeth things for his own private use loseth what is common to all.

He that doth not willingly and freely subject himself to his superior, showeth that

his flesh is not yet perfectly obedient to him, but often rebelleth and repineth.

Learn therefore to submit promptly to thy superior, if thou wishest to subdue thine own flesh.

For a man can better overcome the enemy who is without, if he is not weakened within by intestine strife.

Thy soul hath not a worse or more troublesome enemy than thyself, if thine inferior appetite is not in harmony with the spirit.

It is quite necessary that thou shouldst learn to despise thyself, if thou wouldst prevail over flesh and blood.

Thou still lovest thyself inordinately, and hence thou hesitatest to resign thyself entirely to the will of others.

2. And yet, what great matter is it that thou, who art but dust and ashes, shouldst submit to a man for God's sake, considering that I, the Omnipotent and Most High, who created all things out of nothing, have humbly subjected Myself to man for thy sake?

I became the humblest and poorest of all, that thou mightest overcome thy pride at the sight of My humility.

O dust, learn to obey. O earth and slime, learn to humble thyself, and to cast thyself down beneath the feet of all!

Learn to bend thine own will, and to place thyself in all subjection.

3. Arise against thyself and suffer no

haughtiness to live in thee; but show thyself so submissive and little that all may walk over thee, and tread thee underfoot like the dirt in the streets.

Vain man, what hast thou to complain of? Vile sinner, what canst thou answer to them that upbraid thee, thou who hast so frequently offended God and so often deserved hell?

But Mine eye spared thee; because thy soul was precious in My sight; that thou mightest know My love, and be ever grateful for My favours.

And that thou mightest always practise true submission and humility, and patiently suffer contempt.

## CHAPTER XIV

*That we must consider the secret Judgements of God, lest we be puffed up with our Good Qualities*



THOU thunderest forth Thy judgements over me, O Lord, and Thou shakest all my bones with fear and trembling, and my soul is sore afraid.

I am astonished when I consider that the heavens are not pure in Thy sight.

If in Thine angels Thou didst find wicked-

ness, and didst not spare them, what will become of me?

The stars have fallen from heaven; and I who am but dust, how can I be presumptuous?

Those whose works seemed praiseworthy have fallen to the lowest depths; and those who ate the bread of angels I have seen delighting themselves in the husks of swine.

2. There is then no sanctity, O Lord, if Thou withdrawest Thy hand.

No wisdom is profitable, if Thou failest to direct us.

No strength availeth, if Thou ceasest to preserve us.

No chastity is secure, if Thou dost not protect it.

No vigilance can save us, unless Thou keepest a holy watch over us.

For if we are abandoned by Thee, we sink and perish; but when visited by Thee, we rise up and live.

Of ourselves we are unsteady, but by Thee we are strengthened; of ourselves we grow cold, but by Thee we are inflamed.

3. Oh, what a humble and mean opinion I ought to have of myself! How little I ought to esteem whatever good I seem to possess!

How deeply I ought to bow, O Lord, before Thine incomprehensible judgements, when I find that I am but a mere nothing and of nothing.

O infinite power, O boundless ocean, where I discover nothing of myself save that I am nothing at all!

Where then is the hiding place of pride? where is the reliance I place on my virtue?

All vainglory is swallowed up in the depths of Thy judgements over me.

4. What is all flesh in Thy sight? Shall the clay glory against the potter?

How can he be puffed up by flattery whose heart is truly subject to God?

All the world will not make him proud whom truth hath subjected to itself; nor will he be moved to self-complacency by any human praise who putteth his trust in God alone.

For, behold, he thinketh, all they that speak are nothing, and they shall pass away with the sound of their words, but *the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.*

## CHAPTER XV

*How we ought to behave and to speak in all our Desire*



ON, speak thus in every occurrence: Lord, if it is pleasing to Thee, let it be done.

Lord, if it tendeth to Thine honour, let it be done in Thy name.

Lord, if Thou seest that this is expedient to me and Thou considerest it profit-



able then grant that I may use it for Thine honour.

But if Thou knowest that it will be hurtful to me, and not tend to the salvation of my soul, take away this desire from me.

For not every desire is of the Holy Ghost, though it seemeth to man right and good.

It is difficult to know with certainty whether a good or an evil spirit urgeth thee to desire this or that; or whether thou art not moved by thine own spirit.

Many who seemed at first to be led by a good spirit have been deceived in the end.

2. Whatever, therefore, occurreth to thy mind ■■ desirable, must always be sought and asked with the fear of God and humility of heart; and thou oughtest especially to commit all to Me with entire submission, and say:

Lord, Thou knowest what is best; let this or that be done, according to Thy will.

Give me what Thou wilt, as much as Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt.

Do with me as Thou knowest best, and ■■ pleaseth Thee most, and will be to Thy greater honour.

Place me where Thou wilt, and do with me what Thou wilt in all things.

I am in Thy hands, whirl me round backwards and forwards.

Behold, I am Thy servant, ready for all, because I do not wish to live for myself,

but for Thee. Oh, could I do so worthily and perfectly!

**■ Prayer for accomplishing the Will of God**

3. O most merciful Jesus, grant me Thy grace, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and remain with me to the end.

Grant that I may always desire and will what is most agreeable to Thee, and pleaseth Thee best.

May Thy will be mine, and may my will ever follow Thine, and be in perfect harmony with it.

Let me have the same likes and dislikes as Thou hast; and let me not be able to like or dislike, but what Thou likest and dislikest.

4. Grant that I may die to all that is in the world; and that for Thy sake I may love to be despised and unknown in this life.

Grant that above all which is pleasing to me I may rest in Thee; and that my heart may find peace in Thee.

Thou art the true peace of the heart, Thou art the only rest; out of Thee all is hard and troublesome.

In this selfsame peace, that is in Thee, the only sovereign, eternal good, I will sleep and I will rest. Amen.

## CHAPTER XVI

*That True Consolation is to be sought in God alone*



LL I can desire or devise for my comfort, I await not here but hereafter.

For if I alone had all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all its delights, it is certain that they could

not last long.

And hence, O my soul, thou canst not be fully comforted nor perfectly refreshed, except by God, who is the comforter of the poor and the protector of the humble.

Wait a little while, O my soul, wait for the fulfilment of the divine promise; and thou shalt have abundance of all good things in heaven.

If thou hast an inordinate longing for the comforts of this world, thou wilt forfeit the eternal and heavenly consolations.

Use temporal things for as much as thou needest them, but desire those that are eternal.

Thou canst not be satiated with earthly things, because thou hast not been created for the purpose of enjoying them.

2. Though thou shouldst possess all created goods, thou couldst not thereby be happy and blessed; for in God, who hath created all things, is all thy happiness and felicity.

Not indeed such happiness as the foolish lovers of the world see and praise; but such as the pious faithful of Christ expect, and the spiritual and pure of heart, whose conversation is in heaven, sometimes taste.

Vain and short-lived is all human comfort.

Blessed and true is the consolation which is received inwardly from the Truth.

A devout man carrieth about with him everywhere his comforter Jesus, and saith to him: O Lord Jesus, be with me in every place and time.

Let it be my comfort willingly to forego all human consolation.

And if Thy comfort be wanting, may Thy will and rightful probation serve for my greatest consolation.

For Thou wilt not always be angry, nor wilt Thou threaten for ever!

## CHAPTER XVII

*That we must cast all our Care upon God*



ON, suffer Me to do with thee what I will: I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkest as man; thou judgest in many things as human affection suggesteth.

2. Lord, what Thou sayest is true. Thy solicitude for me is greater than all the care I can bestow on myself.

He runneth indeed a great risk who doth not cast all his care upon Thee.

Lord, provided my will remaineth true and faithful to Thee, do with me whatsoever may please Thee.

For it cannot be but good whatever Thou shalt do with me.

If Thou wilt have me to be in darkness, be Thou blessed; and if Thou wilt have me to be in light, be Thou again blessed.

If Thou vouchsafest to comfort me, be Thou blessed; and if Thou wilt that I should be afflicted, be Thou always equally blessed.

3. Son, these ought to be thy dispositions, if thou desirest to walk with Me.

Thou must be as ready to suffer as to rejoice.

Thou must as willingly be poor and needy as rich and wealthy.

4. Lord, I shall willingly suffer for Thy sake whatsoever Thou wishest to happen to me.

I will receive from Thy hand without distinction good and evil, sweet and bitter, joy and sorrow; and I will give thanks in all occurrences.

Keep me from all sin, and I shall fear neither death nor hell.

Provided Thou dost not cast me off for ever, nor blot me out of the book of life, all the tribulations which befall me shall not hurt me.

## CHAPTER XVIII

*That we must patiently bear all Temporal Evils after the Example of Christ*



ON, I came down from heaven for thy salvation; I took upon Me thy miseries, not constrained by necessity, but moved by charity, that thou shouldst learn patience and not refuse to bear temporal troubles.

For from the hour of My birth till My death on the Cross I was never without enduring some pain.

I was in great want of temporal things; I frequently heard numerous complaints against Me; I meekly bore shame and disgrace; My benefits were repaid with ingratitude, My miracles with blasphemies, My doctrine with reproofs.

2. Lord, ¶ Thou wast patient during Thy life, thereby chiefly fulfilling the precept of Thy Father, it is but right that I, a wretched sinner, should practise patience according to Thy will, and bear the burden of this corruptible life ¶ long as Thou wilt for my salvation.

For although the present life appeareth burdensome, yet it hath now by Thy grace become very meritorious; and Thine example and the traces of Thy saints make it more tolerable and cheerful to weak mortals.

There is now also far more spiritual comfort in life than formerly in the old law, when the gate of heaven remained closed, when the way thither seemed darker, and but few took the trouble of seeking the kingdom of heaven.

But even they who were then just and saved could not enter the heavenly kingdom before the atonement of Thy sacred passion and death.

3. Oh, what thanks I am bound to render Thee for having vouchsafed to point out to me and to all the faithful the straight and proper way to Thine everlasting kingdom!

For Thy life is our way; and by holy patience we go to Thee, who art our crown.

Unless Thou hadst gone before us and taught us, who would have cared to go that way?

Oh, how many would remain far behind, did they not behold Thy bright example!

Lo! we are still slothful, though we have heard so much of thy miracles and doctrines! What would become of us if we lacked this great light to follow Thee?

## CHAPTER XIX

*Of bearing Injuries and how a truly Patient Man may be known*



**W**HAT sayest thou, my son? Cease to complain, when thou considerest My sufferings and those of the saints. Thou hast not yet resisted unto blood.

Thy sufferings are mere trifles if compared with those of others who have endured so many trials, who have been so greatly tempted, so grievously afflicted, and in so many ways tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind how much others have suffered, that thou mayest the more easily bear the little thou hast to endure.

And if it seemeth not little to thee, consider whether even this is not caused by thine own impatience.

However, whether it be little or great, strive to bear it all patiently.

2. The better thou disposest thyself to suffer, so much the wiser is thy conduct and the greater thy merit; thou shalt also bear thy trouble more easily, if thou art diligently prepared for it by courage and practice.

Do not say: I cannot bear these things from such a man, nor ought I to endure the like, for he hath done me great harm and upbraideth me with things which never entered



my mind; but I will suffer it willingly from another, if I think I ought to endure it.

This is a foolish thought which considereth neither the virtue of patience nor by whom it will be crowned; but rather observeth the offenders and the wrongs that are inflicted.

3. He is not truly long-suffering who will only suffer as much as he thinketh fit and from whom he pleaseth.

A truly patient man on the contrary heedeth not by whom he is tried, whether by his superior, or his equal, or his inferior; whether by a good and holy man or by one who is perverse and unworthy.

But no matter how much or how often he hath to suffer from any creature, he accepteth it all indiscriminately with gratitude from the hand of God, and esteemeth it a great gain.

For with God no suffering, however trifling, will pass unrewarded, if it is endured for His sake.

4. Be then ready for the fight, if thou wouldst win the victory.

Without a struggle thou canst not obtain the crown of patience.

If thou wilt not suffer, thou refuseth to be crowned.

But if thou wishest to be crowned, fight manfully, and suffer patiently.

Without labour rest cannot be had; and without battle the victory cannot be won.

5. May that, O Lord, which appeareth impossible to me by nature, become possible by Thy grace.

Thou knowest that I can bear but little, and that I am easily discouraged when a slight trouble ariseth.

Grant that every tribulation endured for Thy name's sake may become pleasing and desirable to me; for to suffer and to grieve for the love of Thee is very profitable to my soul.

## CHAPTER XX

*Of the Acknowledgement of our own Weakness,  
and of the Miseries of this Life*



**I** WILL confess mine injustice against myself; to Thee, O Lord, I will confess my weakness.

It is often a trivial matter that discourageth and afflicteth me.

I purpose to behave courageously; but no sooner doth a little trial occur, than I become greatly perplexed.

It is sometimes but a mere trifle which is the occasion of a violent temptation.

And when I think myself somewhat safe, and feel no trouble, I find myself at times almost blown down by a slight breeze.

2. Behold, then, O Lord, mine abjection and frailty, which Thou knowest best!

Have pity, and *draw me out of the mire, that I may not stick fast*, nor be utterly abandoned.

This is what often troubleth and confoundeth me before Thee: that I am so frail, and so weak in resisting my passions. And although generally my temptations do not make me consent, yet their persistency is also troublesome and grievous to me; and it is very irksome to live thus in daily strife.

Thus I learn how great my weakness is; for these detestable imaginations always enter my mind much more readily than they depart.

3. Most mighty God of Israel, zealous lover of faithful souls! Oh, that Thou wouldst consider the labour and sorrow of Thy servant, and assist him in all things whatever he shall go to.

Strengthen me with heavenly fortitude, lest the old man, that is this miserable flesh not yet fully subject to the spirit, succeed in overcoming me; and against this it is necessary to fight, so long as this miserable life lasteth.

Alas! what life is this which is never free from troubles and miseries, and in which all is full of snares and enemies!

For when one tribulation or temptation goeth, another cometh; and even while the former conflict yet lasteth, many others occur, and that unexpectedly.

4. And how can we love a life filled with

so much bitterness and exposed to so many calamities and miseries?

How can that even be called a life which begetteth so many deaths and diseases?

And yet it is loved, and many seek their delight in it.

The world is often blamed for being deceitful and vain; and yet it is not easily renounced, because the lust of the flesh is too powerful.

But if some things induce us to love it, others move us to despise it.

The concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life induce us to love the world; but the pains and miseries which justly ensue produce hatred and loathing for it.

5. Yet, alas, evil pleasure conquereth the heart attached to the world, which counteth it delightful to be under the briers; because it hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetness of God nor the inward charm of virtue.

But they who perfectly despise the world and strive to live for God in holy restraint are not unacquainted with of the divine sweetness promised to those who truly renounce all earthly things; and they see very clearly how grievously the world is mistaken and in how many ways it is deceived.

## CHAPTER XXI

*That we must rest in God above all Goods and Gifts*



**A**BOVE all things, and in all things, thou must ever rest in the Lord, O my soul, for He is the eternal rest of the saints.

Grant, O most sweet and most loving Jesus, that I may rest in Thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and sagacity, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladness, above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and consolation, above all hope and promise, above all merit and desire; above all the gifts and favours which Thou canst bestow and infuse; above all the pleasure and mirth which the mind can conceive and experience; finally, above the angels and arch-angels, and above all the army of heaven; above all things visible and invisible, and above all that is not Thee, O my God.

2. For Thou, O Lord my God, art supremely good above all things, Thou alone most high, Thou alone most powerful, Thou alone most sufficient and most abundant, Thou alone most sweet and most comforting, Thou alone most beautiful and most loving, Thou alone most noble and most

glorious above all, in whom all good things together perfectly are, and always have been and shall be.

And therefore it is all too little and insufficient whatsoever Thou bestowest on me besides Thyself, or whatsoever Thou revealest or promisest concerning Thyself, so long as I do not behold Thee, nor fully possess Thee.

For indeed my heart cannot truly rest, nor be wholly contented, unless it repositeth in Thee, and riseth above all Thy gifts and above all creatures.

3. O my most beloved Spouse, Jesus Christ, most pure Lover of my soul, Lord of all creatures, who will give me the wings of true liberty, that I may fly and rest in Thee?

Oh, when shall it be fully granted to me to be still, and see how sweet Thou art, O Lord my God?

When shall my mind be wholly absorbed in Thee, so that for love of Thee I may not feel myself, but only Thee, above all feeling and measure, in a manner not known to all?

But now I often groan, and reluctantly bear my misfortune.

For in this vale of miseries I meet with many evils, which very often trouble, grieve and discourage me; they also frequently hinder and distract, allure and entangle me, so that I cannot freely approach

Thee, nor enjoy Thy sweet caresses, which the blessed spirits have ever at hand.

Oh, be moved by my sighs, and by my great desolation on earth.

4. O Jesus, brightness of everlasting glory, comfort of the pilgrim soul, with Thee my mouth is speechless, and my silence speaketh to Thee.

How long doth my Lord tarry to come? Let Him come to me, His poor servant, and make me glad. Let Him put forth His hand, and deliver me, miserable creature, from all anguish.

Come, oh, come; for without Thee I can have no joyful day nor hour; for Thou art my joy, and without Thee my table is empty.

I am distressed, and as it were imprisoned and loaded with fetters, until Thou wilt refresh me with the light of Thy presence, and set me free, and show unto me Thy friendly face.

5. Let others, if they like, seek other things instead of Thee; but to me nothing is pleasing, nor shall be pleasing, but Thou, O my God, my Hope, mine eternal Salvation.

I shall not be silent nor cease to pray, till Thy grace returneth and Thou speakest inwardly to me.

6. Behold, here I am. Behold, I have come to thee, because thou hast called upon Me.

Thy tears and the longing of thy soul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy

heart have moved Me and brought Me to thee.

7. And I said: Lord, I called Thee, and wished to enjoy Thee; and I was ready to despise all for Thy sake.

Indeed Thou hast first roused me to seek Thee.

Blessed be Thou therefore, O Lord, who hast thus *done well with Thy servant*, according to the abundance of Thy mercy.

What more can Thy servant say before Thee, but that he humbleth himself deeply in Thy presence, ever mindful of his own wickedness and nothingness.

For there is no one like to Thee, in all Thy wonderful works in heaven and on earth.

Thy works are exceedingly good, Thy judgements are true, and all things are governed by Thy providence.

Praise therefore and glory be to Thee, O Wisdom of the Father; let my tongue, my soul, and all creatures together praise and bless Thee.



## CHAPTER XXII

*Of the Remembrance of the manifold Favours of God*

PEN, O Lord, my heart in Thy law, and teach me to walk in Thy commandments.

Grant that I may know Thy will and remember Thy benefits, both in general and in particular, with great reverence and diligent consideration, that henceforth I may be able to show Thee my gratitude in a worthy manner.

However, I know and confess that I cannot thank Thee sufficiently for the least of Thy favours.

I am not worthy of any of the gifts Thou hast bestowed on me; and when I consider Thy generosity, my spirit loseth itself in Thy greatness.

2. All we have in body and soul, and all the good qualities we possess outwardly or inwardly, naturally or supernaturally, are Thy benefits, and proclaim that Thou art bountiful, kind and good, from whom we have received all these favours.

And although one hath received more, another less, yet all is Thine, and without Thee even the least blessing cannot be had.

He that hath received more cannot glory in his merits, nor extol himself above

others, nor despise one that hath less; for he is greater and better who taketh less credit to himself, and is more humble and devout in giving thanks.

And he that esteemeth himself the least of of all and judgeth himself the most unworthy is best disposed to obtain greater favours.

3. But he who hath received less must not grieve, nor feel indignant, nor envy him that is richer in gifts, but he should rather look up to Thee, O Lord, and praise Thy goodness exceedingly, because Thou bestowest Thy favours so generously, so freely and so willingly, without respect of persons.

As all good cometh from Thee, so Thou must be praised in all things.

Thou knowest what is suitable to be given to each; and why one hath more and another less, it is not for us to judge, but for Thee, by whom the merit of each is appointed.

4. Hence, O Lord God, I also consider it a great favour not to have many gifts, which outwardly and in the opinion of men seem worthy of praise and honour; so that when a man considereth his own personal poverty and abjection, far from becoming sad and despondent in consequence, he should rather be filled with consolation and gladness: because Thou, O Lord, hast chosen the poor and humble, and those whom the world despised, for Thy friends, and members of Thy household.

This is witnessed by Thine own apostles, whom Thou hast made *princes over all the earth*.

For they conversed without blame in the world, and were so humble and upright, without any malice or guile, that they even rejoiced *at being accounted worthy to suffer reproach* for Thy name, and eagerly embraced what the world abhorreth.

5. He therefore that loveth Thee, and appreciateth Thy benefits, should rejoice in nothing more than Thy good will towards him, and the good pleasure of Thine eternal appointment.

And in consequence he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, **as** another wisheth to be the greatest.

And he should be **as** quiet and content in the last place, as in the first, and **as** willing to be despised and scorned, and of no account or repute, as to be better and greater than others in this world.

For Thy will, O Lord, and the love of Thine honour, are preferable to all things, and should comfort and please him more than all the favours which have been or could be granted to him.

## CHAPTER XXIII

*Of Four Things which afford great Peace*

ON, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and of true liberty.

Do as Thou sayest, O Lord, for I shall be glad to hear it.

My son, endeavour to do the will of another, rather

than thine own.

Always prefer having less to having more.

Always seek to occupy the lowest place, and to be subject to all.

Always desire and pray, that the will of God may be fully accomplished in thee.

Behold, a man who acteth thus entereth the realm of peace and rest.

2. O Lord, this short discourse of Thine containeth in itself great perfection.

It is brief in words, but rich in sense and abundant in fruit.

Indeed, if I could observe it faithfully, I should not be so easily disturbed.

For as often **as** I feel myself troubled and burdened, I find that I have strayed from this doctrine.

But Thou, who canst do all things, and ever lovest the progress of the soul, increase Thy grace in me, that I may put Thy words into practice, and work out my salvation.

### **A Prayer against Evil Thoughts**

3. O Lord my God, *be Thou not far from me; O my God, make haste to my help;* for divers thoughts and great fears afflicting my soul have risen up against me.

How shall I pass unhurt? how shall I break through them?

*I will go before thee, saith the Lord, and will humble the great ones of the earth. I will open the gates of the prison, and reveal to thee the concealed riches of secret places.*

Do, O Lord, as Thou sayest, and let all wicked thoughts flee from before Thy face.

This is my hope and mine only comfort, to fly to Thee in all mine afflictions to trust in Thee, to call upon Thee from the bottom of my heart, and patiently to await Thy consolation.

### **A Prayer for the Enlightenment of the Mind**

4. Enlighten me, O good Jesus, with the brightness of inward light, and drive away all darkness from the dwelling of my heart.

Restrain my numerous distractions, and crush the temptations that use violence against me.

Do Thou strongly fight for me, and subdue the evil beasts, I mean these alluring lusts, that I may have peace in Thy strength, and that the abundance of Thy praise may resound in Thy holy court, that is in a pure conscience.

Command the winds and the storms; say to the sea, Be still; and to the north wind, Cease to blow; and there shall be a great calm.

5. Send forth Thy light and Thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth; for I am as the earth which was void and empty, till Thou sheddest Thy light on me.

Pour out Thy grace from above; moisten my heart with heavenly dew; furnish streams of devotion to water the face of the earth, that it may yield the proper and excellent fruit of virtue.

Raise up my heart now oppressed with the burden of sin, and direct all my desires heavenwards; that, having tasted the sweetness of the heavenly bliss, I may feel loth to think of earthly things.

6. Draw me to Thee, and deliver me from the short-lived consolation of creatures; for nothing created can fully appease and satisfy my craving.

Unite me to Thee with an inseparable bond of love; for Thou alone canst content the heart that loveth, and without Thee all the rest is worthless.

CHAPTER XXIV

*Of Avoiding Curious Inquiry into the Lives  
of Others*



Y son, be not curious, nor burden thyself with useless cares.

*What is this or that to thee? follow thou Me.*

For what is it to thee, whether that man be like this or like that; or whether this man acteth or speaketh thus or otherwise.

Thou shalt give an account of thyself, and thou needest not answer for others. Why then dost thou meddle with them?

Behold, I know all men, and see all that happeneth under the sun. I perceive how it is with every one, what he thinketh, what he wisheth and to what end he directeth his intention.

To Me, therefore, all things must be committed; as for thee, keep thyself in perfect peace, and let the hasty hurry as much as he will.

Whatever he doeth or sayeth will come upon him, for he cannot deceive Me.

2. Have no concern for the shadow of a great name, nor the acquaintance of many persons, nor the particular friendship of men.

For these things cause distractions and great darkness of heart.

I would willingly communicate My words and reveal My secrets to thee, if thou wouldst carefully note My coming, and open to Me the door of thy heart. Be prudent, and watch in prayers, and humble thyself in all things.

## CHAPTER XXV

*Wherein firm Peace of Heart and true Progress in Virtue Consist*



Y son, I have said: *Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, do I give unto you.*

All desire peace, but all do not use the means of obtaining true peace.

My peace is with the meek and humble of heart. Thy peace shall be in much patience. If thou wilt hear Me, and follow My teaching, thou shalt enjoy great peace.

What then shall I do, Lord?

2. In every occurrence take heed to thyself, what thou oughtest to do, and what thou oughtest to say; and have no other intention but to please Me alone; and neither desire nor seek anything besides Me.

Moreover, judge not rashly of the sayings or doings of others, nor interfere with things not committed to thy care; and so it



may come to pass that thou shalt be but little and rarely disturbed.

On the other hand, never to feel any trouble, or never to suffer any inconvenience of soul or body, belongeth not to this life but to the state of eternal rest.

Do therefore not imagine that thou hast found true peace if thou experiencest no difficulty; or that all is well if thou hast to contend with no adversary; or that all is perfect if everything happeneth according to thy liking.

Neither oughtest thou to conceive a high opinion of thyself, or think thyself specially beloved, if thou enjoyest great devotion and sweetness; for it is not by these signs that a true lover of virtue is known; nor doth the advancement and perfection of a man consist in these things.

Wherein then, O Lord?

3. In offering thyself with thy whole heart to the divine will; not seeking thine own advantage in anything, whether great or small, whether in time or eternity.

So that with one and the same countenance thou shouldst persevere in thanking God, both in prosperity and adversity, weighing all things in an equal balance.

If thou art so strong and patient in hope, that even when inward consolation is withdrawn, thou preparest thy heart to suffer yet more, without excusing thyself as if thou hadst not deserved such great trials;

but if in all that I ordain thou acknowledgest Me as just, and praisest Me as holy, then thou walkest in the true and straight way of peace; and there will be an undoubted hope that thou shalt see My face again with joy.

And if thou arrivest at a perfect contempt of thyself, know that thou shalt then enjoy the abundance of peace, as much as is possible in this thy banishment.

## CHAPTER XXVI

*Of the Excellence of a free Heart, which is obtained by humble Prayer rather than by Reading*



ORD, it is the work of a perfect man, never to divert the mind from the pursuit of heavenly things; and to pass unconcerned in the midst of many cares; not as one who heedeth not, but by the privilege of a free mind, clinging to no creature with inordinate affection.

2. I beseech thee, O most merciful God, preserve me from the cares of this life, lest I become too much entangled in them; and from the manifold needs of the body, lest I be ensnared by pleasure; also from all hindrances of the soul, lest, weakened by troubles, I lose courage.

I do not say, Preserve me from those things which worldly vanity so eagerly seeketh, but from the miseries which, owing to our

fallen condition in this mortal life, painfully burden and hinder the soul of thy servant, so that he cannot, as often as he wisheth, enter into the liberty of the spirit.

3. O my God, untold sweetness, turn for me into bitterness all human comfort which withdraweth me from the love of eternal joys and allureth me by the hope of some temporal pleasure.

Let not flesh and blood overcome me, O my God, let it not conquer; let not the world and its short-lived glory deceive me; let not the devil and his cunning overthrow me.

Give me strength to resist, patience to suffer, constancy to persevere.

Give me the sweet unction of thy spirit instead of all the consolations of the world; and instead of sensual affection fill me with the love of Thy name.

4. Behold, meat, drink, clothing and other commodities which serve for the support of the body are burdensome to a fervent soul.

Grant that I may use these needful things with moderation, and that I may not become attached to them by an inordinate desire.

It is not lawful to reject them all, for life must be supported; but thy holy law forbiddeth to seek what is superfluous and what is most delicious; for otherwise the flesh would rebel against the spirit.

In these things, I pray Thee, let Thy hand

guide me, and teach me, lest I fall into any excess.

## CHAPTER XXVII

*That Self-Love greatly withdraweth us from the Sovereign Good*



Y son, thou oughtest to give all for all, and keep nothing for thyself.

Know that the love of thyself hurteth thee more than anything in the world.

According to the love and liking thou hast for an object, it cleaveth to thee more or less.

If thy love is pure, sincere and well-ordered, thou shalt be free from the slavery of worldly things.

Desire not what thou must not have; keep not what may hinder thee and deprive thee of inward freedom.

It is surprising that thou dost not commit thyself wholly to Me from the bottom of thy heart, with all thou canst desire or possess.

2. Why art thou devoured by vain grief? Why art thou wearied by superfluous cares?

Hold thyself at My disposal, and thou shalt suffer no loss.

If thou seekest this or that and wouldst be here or there for thine own convenience and the better to have what thou wishest, thou shalt never be at rest nor free from

care; for in everything thou wilt find some defect, and in every place there will be some one to thwart thee.

3. Hence thou canst not be satisfied by obtaining any temporal gratification, though thou shouldst frequently have thy wish; but rather by despising it, and plucking it up by the root from thy heart.

And this is to be understood not only of money and riches, but also of the desire of honour and love of vainglory, which all pass away with the world.

The place little will avail thee if the spirit of fervour is wanting; neither will that peace long continue which is sought from without if the state of thy heart hath no solid foundation, that is unless thou abidest in Me; thou canst change places, but not better thyself.

For when the occasion ariseth and is taken, thou shalt find what thou didst flee from, and even worse.

### 3 Prayer for obtaining Purity of Heart and Heavenly Wisdom

4. Strengthen me, O God, by the grace of the Holy Ghost.

Grant me power to be strengthened unto the inward man, and to empty my heart of every useless care and anxiety, and not to be moved by various desires of any object whatever, be it mean or precious; but to look on all things as passing away, and on myself also as passing with them.

For nothing is lasting under the sun, where  
*all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

Oh, how wise is he who thus considereth  
all things!

5. O Lord, give me heavenly wisdom,  
that I may learn to seek and find Thee  
above all things else, to taste and love thee  
above all things, and to look upon all things  
according to the rule of Thy wisdom, as  
they really are.

Grant that I may prudently beware of flat-  
terers and patiently bear with my opponents.

For it is great wisdom not to be moved  
with every wind of words, nor to give ear  
to the smooth-tongued siren; thus we may  
safely proceed in the way on which we  
have entered.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### *Against the Tongues of Slanderers*



ON, be not troubled if some  
persons think ill of thee,  
and say of thee what thou  
likest not to hear.

Thou shouldst even have a  
worse opinion of thyself,  
and think no one weaker  
than thyself.

If thou walkest as an inward man, thou wilt  
make but small account of fleeting words.

It requireth no little prudence to be silent  
in an evil hour, and to turn inwardly to

Me, and not to be disturbed by the judgments of men.


2. Let not thy peace depend on what people say, for whether they interpret thine actions well or ill thou art not on that account a different man.

Where is true peace and true glory to be found? Is it not in Me?

And he that neither desireth to please men nor feareth to displease them shall enjoy much peace.

From inordinate love and vain fear, all uneasiness of heart and distraction of the senses proceed.

## CHAPTER XXIX

*How we ought to invoke and bless God when some Trouble threateneth* 



AY Thy name, O Lord, be blessed for ever; for it was Thy will that I should experience this temptation and tribulation.

I cannot escape it, but must needs fly to Thee, that Thou mayest help me and turn it to mine advantage.

Lord, now I am in trouble, and my heart is ill at ease, for I am much harassed by my present suffering.

And now, beloved Father, *what shall I say?*

I am driven into straits. *Save me from this hour.*

*But for this cause I came unto this hour* that Thou shouldst be glorified, when, having been exceedingly humbled, I shall be delivered by Thee.

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; for helpless as I am what can I do, and whither shall I go without Thee?

Grant me patience, O Lord, also this time. Help me, O my God, and I shall not fear, no matter how great my trouble may be.

2. And now, what shall I say in my sufferings? Lord, Thy will be done. I have indeed deserved to be afflicted and distressed.

I must needs bear it; oh, may I do so patiently, till the storm pass over, and it go better with me!

Yet Thine almighty hand is also able to remove this trial from me, and to lessen its violence, so that I may not be utterly prostrate; ■ Thou hast oftentimes dealt with me in the past, O my God, my mercy.

And the harder it is to me, the easier to Thee is this change of the right hand of the Most High.



## CHAPTER XXX

*That we must implore the Assistance of God,  
and hope to recover His Favour*



ON, I am the Lord, who giveth strength in the day of trouble.

Come to Me when it is not well with thee.

This is what chiefly hindereth heavenly consolation, that thou art too slow in betaking thyself to prayer.

Before earnestly invoking Me, thou seekest many comforts, and divertest thyself with outward things.

And hence it happeneth that all is of little avail until thou perceivest that I am He who deliver them that hope in Me; and that there is no efficacious help, nor profitable counsel, nor lasting remedy but in Me.

Now, however, that thou hast taken heart after the storm, recover thy strength in the light of My mercies; for I am nigh, saith the Lord, to restore all, not only fully, but even copiously and to overflowing.

2. Is there anything hard to Me? Or shall I be like a man who promiseth and performeth not?

Where is Thy faith? Be steadfast and persevering.

Be long-suffering and brave: comfort will come to thee in due time.

Wait for Me, wait! I will come and heal Thee.

It is a temptation that troubleth thee, and a vain fear that frighteneth thee.

What doth anxiety about the chances of the future bring thee but sorrow upon sorrow? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.*

It is vain and useless to be either pleased or displeased with future events, which will, perhaps, never happen.

3. But it is natural that thou shouldst be deluded with such vain fancies; and a sign that thou art still weak in spirit when thou art so easily disturbed by the promptings of the enemy.

For it is indifferent to him whether he can beguile and deceive thee with truths or falsehoods; or whether he can overthrow thee by love for the present, or fear for the future.

*Let not then thy heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.*

Believe in Me, and have confidence in My mercy.

When thou thinkest thyself far away from Me, I am frequently very near.

When thou imaginest that almost all is lost, thou art often on the point of earning a very great profit.

All is not lost when something turneth out against thy will.

Thou must not judge according to thy present feeling, nor be impressed and en-

grossed with thy trouble, no matter whence it may arise, as if all hope of relief had fled.

4. Do not consider thyself wholly forsaken, though for a time I send thee some tribulation, or withdraw from thee a pleasing consolation; for this is the way to the kingdom of heaven.

And, no doubt, it is more expedient for thee and for Mine other servants to be tried by adversity than to have all things at will.

I know thy secret thoughts, and how much better it is for thy salvation that thou shouldst sometimes be left without devotion; lest, perhaps, thou be puffed up with thy progress, and delight in imagining to be what thou art not.

What I have given I can withdraw, and restore it when I please.

5. When I give it to thee, it remaineth Mine; when I withdraw it, I do not take what is thine; for every best gift and every perfect gift is Mine.

If I send thee some trouble or adversity, do not repine, nor let thy courage fail thee; I can easily relieve thee, and change all thy sorrow into joy.

However, I am righteous and greatly to be praised, when I deal thus with thee.

6. If thou art truly wise and viewest all things aright, thou wilt never be overcome with grief on account of thy troubles; but rather rejoice and be thankful.

Indeed, thou shouldst count it thine only

joy, that, afflicting thee with sorrow, I spare thee not.

*As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you,* I said to My beloved disciples, whom assuredly I did not send to temporal enjoyments, but to great conflicts; not to honours, but to revilings; not to idleness, but to action; not to rest, but to bring forth much fruit in patience. Remember these words, My son.

## CHAPTER XXXI

*That we must forsake all Creatures to find the Creator*



**T**RULY, O Lord, I still stand in need of a greater grace, if I am to arrive there, where no man nor any creature can hinder me. For so long as anything detaineth me, I cannot freely take my flight to Thee.

The Prophet David desired to fly to Thee unhindered, when he said: *Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest?*

What is more tranquil than a single eye? And who enjoyeth greater liberty than he who desireth nothing on earth?

We must therefore rise above all creatures, and leave our own selves completely behind, and see in an ecstasy of mind that among Thy creatures there is no one like to Thee, the Creator of all.

And unless a man is released from all that is created, he cannot freely turn his attention to what is divine.

And hence we find but few contemplatives, because there are but few who can wholly disengage themselves from perishable and created things.

2. This requireth a great grace, which releaseth the soul, and raiseth it above itself.

And unless a man is elevated in spirit, and rid of all creatures, and wholly united to God, whatever he may know, and whatever he may possess, is not of much consequence.

He shall long remain a beginner and shall grovel below, who esteemeth anything great, except the one, only, immense, eternal good.

And whatever is not God, is nothing, and must be considered as of no account.

There is a great difference between the wisdom of an enlightened and devout man and the knowledge of a learned and studious divine.

The science which floweth from above by God's infusion is far more noble than that which is acquired by the application of the human intellect.

3. We meet with many who desire the sweetness of contemplation, but they do not strive to practise what is required for it.

A great obstacle is that they occupy themselves with outward signs and objects, and

attend but little to perfect inward mortification.

I know not what it is, or by what spirit we are led, and what we pretend, we who are apparently called spiritual men; that we take such pains, and have so much solicitude for transitory and worthless things, and we seldom if ever give any attention to our soul, with a perfect composure of mind.

4. But, alas, presently after a brief recollection we rush outwards; and we do not subject our actions to a strict examination.

We do not consider where our affections lie entangled; nor do we deplore that all our works are defiled by so many imperfections.

Because *all flesh had corrupted its way*, therefore did the great deluge follow.

Whereas, then, our interior disposition is greatly perverted, it is but natural that the action which proceedeth from it should show a lack of inward vigour, and also be vitiated.

From a pure heart issueth the fruit of a good life.

5. It is often asked how much a man hath done; but whether he hath done it with a good motive is not so attentively considered.

It is asked whether a man is courageous, rich, handsome, skilful; or whether he is a good writer, a good singer, a good craftsman; but how poor in spirit he is, how

patient and meek, how pious and spiritual is commonly passed over in silence.

Nature regardeth the exterior qualities of man, grace looketh at the interior.

The former is often mistaken; the latter hopeth in God, so as not to be deceived.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### *Of Self-Abnegation and the Renunciation of all Desire for Worldly Things*



Y son, thou canst not possess perfect freedom of heart, unless thou dost wholly renounce thyself.

All they that love God for the sake of the reward and thus show that they are ac-

tuated by self-love, all they that are too eager in their good desires, all they that are inquisitive, fickle, ever seeking their own advantage rather than the things that are Jesus Christ's, are bound with shackles.

They often devise and contrive what will not last, for all that is not born of God shall perish.

Remember this short and perfect lesson: Forsake all, and thou shalt find all; abandon thy desires, and thou shalt obtain rest.

Ponder over this in thy heart; and when thou hast put it into practice thou shalt understand all.

2. Lord, this is not the work of one day,

nor child's play; yea, in these few words all religious perfection is contained.

3. My son, thou must not presently be wearied or discouraged, when thou hearest in what way perfect religious walk; but thou shouldst rather be urged on to greater perfection, and at least sigh after it longingly.

Oh, that it were thus with thee, and that thou hadst advanced so far as not to be a lover of thyself, and that thou wert ready simply to comply with My will and the will of the superior whom I have appointed over thee; thou shouldst then please Me exceedingly, and thy whole life would pass in joy and peace.

There are yet many things which thou hast to abandon, and unless thou givest them up wholly to Me, thou shalt not obtain what thou prayest for.

*I counsel thee to buy of Me refined gold, that thou mayest be made rich; that is, heavenly wisdom, which trampleth upon all things below.*

Despise earthly wisdom and all desire to please thyself or others.

4. As I told thee, thou must buy what seemeth paltry to the world, instead of what is costly and highly esteemed.

For true heavenly wisdom, which thinketh not highly of itself, nor seeketh to be magnified on earth, appeareth very insignificant and contemptible and is almost buried in oblivion. Many praise it with their lips,



but they stray far from it by their lives; yet this is the precious pearl mentioned in the Gospel, which is hidden from many.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### *Of Inconstancy of Heart, and of Directing our Ultimate Intention to God*



ON, depend not upon thy present disposition: it will soon give way for another.

As long as thou livest thou art subject to change, even against thy will, so that thou findest thyself now joyful, then sad; now quiet, then troubled; now devout, then dry; now diligent, then sluggish; now serious, then gay.

But he that is wise and well trained in the spiritual life is above all these changes; not heeding what he feeleth in himself, or which way the wind of inconstancy bloweth; but directing his whole intention to the proper and desired end.

For he will be able to remain unruffled and undisturbed, if in all these different occurrences he keepeth the pure gaze of his intention constantly fixed on Me.

2. And the clearer the sight of his intention is, the more steadfastly will a man weather various storms.

But the eye of a pure intention is in many ways dimmed, for it is easily cast on

some pleasing object which presenteth itself.

And seldom also do we meet with a man who is wholly free from the blemish of self-seeking.

So the Jews came on a certain occasion to Bethania, to Martha and Mary, *not for Jesus' sake only, but also that they might see Lazarus.*

Thou must then purify the eye of thine intention, that it may be candid and upright; and thou must direct it towards Me, beyond all the various intervening objects.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV

*That God delighteth a Loving Heart above all  
and in all*



**H**OLD my God and my all! What more do I want, and what greater happiness can I desire?

Oh, delightful and sweet word! but only to him who loveth the Eternal Word, and not the world nor the things which are in the world.

My God and my all! This is saying enough for him who understandeth it; and to repeat it often is delightful to a loving heart.

For when Thou art with us, all is pleasant; but when Thou art absent, all is wearisome.

Thou givest tranquillity of heart, and great peace, and gratifying joy.

Thou causest us to judge well of all things, and to praise Thee in all; and no object can please us long without Thee; but to be agreeable and truly tasteful to us, it must be accompanied by Thy grace and seasoned with the spice of Thy wisdom.

2. What will be insipid to him who relisheth Thee?

And what will he who hath no relish for Thee consider palatable?

But the wise men of this world and they that live according to the flesh lack Thy wisdom: for among the former we find much vanity, and among the latter death.

They, on the contrary, who follow Thee by the contempt of worldly things and the mortification of the flesh must be considered truly wise: for they pass over from vanity to truth, from the flesh to the spirit.

These have a relish for God, and whatever good they may find in creatures they turn it all to the praise of their Creator.

Different, however, and very different is the impression of the Creator and that of the creature, of eternity and of time, of the uncreated light and of borrowed light.

3. O Eternal Light, surpassing all created splendours, send forth lightning from on high, penetrating my inmost heart.

Purify, gladden, brighten and enliven my

soul with all its powers; that it may cling to Thee with transports of joy.

Oh, when shall that blessed and desirable hour come, in which Thou wilt satiate me with Thy presence, and be to me All in all?

So long as this is not granted, my joy shall not be full.

But alas! the old man still liveth in me: he is not wholly crucified, nor perfectly dead.

He still lusteth strongly against the spirit, he stirreth up domestic strife and suffereth not the kingdom of my soul to be at rest.

4. But thou who rulest the power of the sea and appeasest the motion of the waves thereof, arise and help me!

Scatter the nations that delight in wars, crush them by Thy power.

Show forth, I beseech Thee, Thy wonders, and let Thy right hand be glorified; for there is no other hope or refuge for me, save in Thee, O Lord my God.

## CHAPTER XXXV

*That there is no Security from Temptation  
in this Life*



Y son, thou art never safe in this life, but as long as thou livest, thou always needest spiritual armour. Thou dwellest among foes, and art assailed on the right hand and on the left.

If then thou dost not make use of the shield of patience on every side, thou shalt not be long without wounds.

Moreover, if thou dost not set thy heart firmly on Me, with a sincere will to suffer all things for My sake, thou shalt not be able to bear the brunt of the battle nor obtain the palm of the blessed.

Thou must therefore pass manfully through all these trials, and fight with a strong hand against all obstacles.

For *to him that overcometh is given manna*; and great wretchedness is reserved for the sluggard.

2. If thou seekest rest in this life, how then canst thou arrive at eternal rest?

Do not prepare thyself for much rest, but for great patience.

Seek true peace, not on earth, but in heaven; not in men, nor in other creatures, but in God alone.

For the love of God thou must willingly

bear all evils, such as labours and sorrows, temptations, vexations, anxieties, necessities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reproofs, humiliations, confusions, chastisements and ignominies.

These things are helpful for virtue; they try the young soldiers of Christ; they fashion a heavenly crown.

I will give an everlasting reward for a short labour, and infinite glory for a passing confusion.

3. Thinkest thou that thou canst always have spiritual comforts at will?

My saints have not always had them, but rather many difficulties, and various temptations, and great spiritual desolation.

But they bore themselves patiently throughout, and trusted more in God than in themselves, knowing that *the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the future glory*, which is thereby acquired.

Wouldst thou have forthwith what many others have only obtained after many tears and great labours?

*Expect the Lord, do manfully, and take courage; waver not, retreat not, but bravely expose both thy body and soul for the glory of God.*

I will amply repay thee; I will be with thee in all thy trouble.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

*Against the Vain Judgements of Men*

ON, cast thy heart firmly on the Lord, and do not fear the judgement of men when thy conscience declareth thee righteous and innocent.

It is good and salutary to suffer in this manner; and it will not seem grievous to an humble heart, which trusteth more in God than in itself.

Many folk say many things, and therefore we must not believe them too readily; neither is it possible to give satisfaction to all.

Although Saint Paul endeavoured to please all in the Lord, and *became all things to all men*, yet he considered it of no consequence to be judged by man's day.

2. He worked zealously for the edification and salvation of others, as much **as** was feasible and possible to him; yet he could not avoid being at times judged and despised by them.

Therefore he committed all to God who knew all; and by patience and humility he protected himself from the mouths that spoke wicked things, and from them that thought unreasonably and wrongly of him, and boasted to their heart's content.

Sometimes, however, he made answer, lest the weak might be scandalized by his silence.

3. *Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a mortal man? To-day he is, and to-morrow he shall not be found.*

Fear God, and thou shalt not be in dread of the terrors of men.

What harm can anyone do thee by his words or insults? He hurteth himself rather than thee; nor shall he escape the judgement of God, whoever he may be.

Do thou keep God before thine eyes and contend not in peevish words.

And if at present thou appearest to be crushed, and thou hast to suffer a humiliation which thou dost not deserve, repine not at this, nor lessen thy reward by impatience.

But rather look heavenwards to Me who am able to deliver thee from all confusion and wrong, and to requite every one according to his works.



## CHAPTER XXXVII

*That an Unconditional and Entire Resignation  
of Ourselves is required to obtain  
Liberty of Heart*



**Y** son, renounce thyself,  
and thou shalt find Me.

Have no preference, nor  
anything of thine own,  
and it will always turn  
to thine advantage. For  
no sooner shalt thou have

resigned thyself unreservedly, than an increase of grace shall be granted thee.

2. Lord, how often shall I resign myself, and wherein shall I renounce myself?

3. Always, and at all times; in that which is little as well as in that which is great. I except nothing, but will that thou shouldst be disengaged from all things.

Otherwise, how canst thou be Mine and I thine, if thou dost not cast off all self-will, both inwardly and outwardly?

The sooner thou doest this, the better it will be for thee; and the more fully and sincerely thou doest it, so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much more shalt thou gain.

4. There are some who resign themselves, but with a restriction; for they do not fully trust in God, and therefore they wish to provide for themselves.

Some also offer all at first; but afterwards, driven by temptation, they return to their own; and hence they make no progress in virtue.

These shall not acquire the true liberty of a pure heart, nor the favour of My sweet intimacy, unless they first make an entire resignation and a daily sacrifice of themselves, without which this enjoyable union doth not and cannot exist.

Very often I have told thee, and I tell thee again: deny thyself, resign thyself, and thou shalt enjoy great inward peace.

Give all for all; keep nothing back, take nothing back; rely absolutely and unhesitatingly upon Me, and thou shalt have Me. Thou shalt be free of heart, and darkness shall not cover thee.

Work for this, pray for this, long for this, that thou mayest rid thyself of all that is thine own; and thus disengaged, follow Jesus stripped of all; that thou mayest die to thyself, and live to Me eternally.

Then all vain illusions, all evil tumults, and all superfluous cares shall vanish.

Then also excessive anxiety shall depart, and inordinate love shall die.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

*Of Good Guidance in Outward Occupations,  
and of having Recourse to God in Danger*



**Y** son, thou must diligently endeavour to acquire inward freedom and perfect self-control in every place and in every outward action or occupation; so that all things may be subject to thee, and not thou to them.

That thou mayest be lord and ruler of thine actions, and not servant or slave.

But rather a freeman and a true Hebrew associated with the lot and liberty of the children of God, who trample on things present, and contemplate what is eternal.

Who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right on those of heaven.

Who do not become attached to temporal things, but rather use them for their service, as they were destined and intended by God the great Creator, who left nothing without due order among His creatures.

2. If moreover in all that happeneth thou reliest not on outward appearances, nor judgest according to the flesh of what thou seest or hearest: but on every occasion thou presently enterest into the tabernacle, like Moses, to consult the Lord; then thou shalt sometimes hear the divine reply, and de-

part, instructed in many things, both present and to come.

For Moses always betook himself to the tabernacle, for the solution of doubts and questions; and had recourse to prayer for help in dangers and troubles caused by wicked men.

So oughtest thou to flee to the sanctuary of thy heart, and earnestly implore the divine assistance.

For we read that Josue and the children of Israel were deceived by the Gabaonites, because they had not beforehand sought counsel of the Lord; and, trusting too lightly to fair words, they were duped by feigned sincerity.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

*That a Man must not be over-Anxious about his Affairs*



Y son, always commit thy business to Me, I shall duly arrange it at the proper time.

Wait for My direction, and thou shalt find it to thine advantage.

2. Lord, most readily do I commit all to Thee; for mine anxiety availeth but little.

Would that I did not dwell so much on future events, but abandoned myself without hesitation to Thy good pleasure.

3. Son, it often happeneth that a man is

greatly preoccupied with something which he desireth; but no sooner hath he obtained it, than he beginneth to feel differently; because his inclination doth not long dwell on one and the same object, but rather driveth him from one thing to another.

It is, therefore, no small matter to renounce thyself, even in trifles.

4. The true progress of a man consisteth in self-abnegation; and he that hath renounced himself is very free and undisturbed.

The old enemy, however, who is hostile to all that is good, never ceaseth from tempting; but night and day he layeth dangerous snares, if perchance he may catch the unwary in his deceitful net.

*Watch ye, and pray, saith the Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.*

## CHAPTER XL

*That Man hath of himself nothing that is Good,  
nor anything in which he can Glory*



**L**ORD, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?

How hath man deserved that Thou shouldst give him Thy grace?

Lord, how can I complain if Thou abandonest me? or what can I justly allege if Thou dost not grant my request?

This, indeed, I may truly think and say: Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing; of myself I have nothing that is good; but I fail in all things, and ever drift towards nothingness.

And unless I ~~am~~ assisted, and inwardly strengthened by Thee, I become quite cold and careless.

2. But Thou, O Lord, art always the self-same, and endurest for ever; always good, just and holy; doing all things well, justly and holily, and disposing them in wisdom.

But I, who am more inclined to go backwards than forwards, do not always continue in the same state, for seven times pass over me.

Yet it soon goeth better with me when it so pleaseth Thee, and Thou stretchest forth a helping hand; for Thou alone canst assist me, without human aid; and canst strengthen me to such a degree that my countenance shall be no more changed, but that my heart shall turn to Thee alone, and be at rest.

3. Hence, if I could but properly reject all human comfort, either because I wish to obtain the grace of devotion, or because the need in which I am compelleth me to seek Thee, as there is no man who can comfort me; then I might justly hope for Thy grace, and rejoice in the gift of a fresh consolation.

4. Thanks be to Thee from whom all good cometh, whenever it goeth well with me.

I am but emptiness and nothingness in Thy sight, a wavering and weak man.

How then can I boast, or why do I wish to be esteemed?

Is it for nothing? but this is indeed the greatest vanity.

Truly, vainglory is an evil plague, and the worst of all vanities; because it depriveth a man of true glory, and robbeth him of heavenly grace.

For when he is pleased with himself, he displeaseth Thee; when he yearneth for human praise, he is despoiled of true virtue.

5. But it is a real honour and a holy joy for a man to glory in Thee, and not in himself; to rejoice in Thy name, not in his own strength; and not to delight in any creature, except for Thy sake.

Let Thy name be praised, not mine; let Thy work be exalted, not mine; let Thy holy name be blessed, but let no human praise be given to me.

Thou art my glory; thou art the joy of my heart.

In Thee I will glory and rejoice all day; as for myself, I will not glory but in mine infirmities.

Let the Jews seek glory one from another; I will seek that which cometh from God alone.

For all human glory, all temporal honour, all worldly greatness, compared to Thine eternal glory, is but vanity and folly.

O my truth and my mercy, my God, Holy Trinity, to Thee alone be praise, honour, power and glory, for ever and ever!

## CHAPTER XLI

### *Of the Contempt of all Temporal Honour*



Y son, take it not to heart if thou seest others honoured and promoted, and thyself despised and humbled.

Lift up thy heart to Me in heaven, and the contempt of men on earth will not afflict thee.

2. Lord, we are in blindness, and easily seduced by vanity.

If I examine myself properly, I find that no creature hath ever done me an injury; so that I have no just cause of complaining to Thee.

But as I have often and grievously sinned against Thee, it is but right that all creatures should rise up in arms against me.

To me, therefore, shame and contempt are justly due; but to Thee praise, honour and glory.

And unless I am prepared to be willingly despised and forsaken by all creatures, and to be accounted as absolutely nothing, I cannot become inwardly calm and steadfast, nor enlightened in spirit, nor wholly united to Thee.



CHAPTER XLII

*That our Peace must not depend on Man*



**O**N, if thou makest thy peace depend on any man, by reason of thy sympathy and fellowship thou shalt be unsteady and embarrassed. But if thou hast recourse to the ever-living and abiding Truth, thou shalt not grieve at the departure or death of a friend.

The love which thou bearest thy friend must be founded on Me; and for My sake thou must love those who appear to thee to be good and are much valued in this life.

Without Me friendship is neither profitable nor lasting; nor is that love true and pure which I do not knit.

Thou oughtest to be so dead to the affection of them that are dear to thee that, as far as thou art concerned, thou shouldst prefer to be without all human friendship.

In proportion as a man becometh estranged from all earthly consolation, he draweth nearer to God.

And the lower he descendeth in himself, and the meaner he becometh in his own eyes, the higher also he ascendeth towards God.

But he that attributeth any good to himself hindereth God's grace from coming to him; for the grace of the Holy Ghost ever seeketh an humble heart.

2. If thou couldst be fully convinced of thy nothingness, and rid thyself of all created love, I would communicate Myself to thee with abundant grace.

When thou lookest on creatures, the sight of the Creator is withdrawn from thee.

Learn to overcome thyself in all things for the sake of thy Creator; then thou shalt be able to arrive at the knowledge of God.

However little a thing may be, if it is inordinately loved and coveted, it keepeth thee back from the greatest good, and is hurtful to thee.

## CHAPTER XLIII

### *Against Vain and Worldly Learning*



Y son, let the fair and subtle words of men make no impression on thee, for *the kingdom of God is not in speech, but in power.*

Hearken to My words, which inflame the heart and enlighten the mind, excite to compunction, and infuse manifold consolation.

Never read any book with the intention of appearing learned or wise.

Study the mortification of thy vices, for this will profit thee more than the understanding of many difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and learned

many things, thou must ever return to the one principle.

I am *He that teacheth man knowledge*, and I bestow a clearer understanding on little ones than can be imparted by man.

He to whom I speak will soon be wise, and greatly advance in perfection.

Woe to them that seek to learn many curious things from men, and attend but little to the way of serving Me.

The time will come when the Master of all masters, Christ, the Lord of angels, shall appear, to hear every one's lesson, that is, to examine the conscience of each.

And then *He will search Jerusalem with lamps*; and the hidden things of darkness shall be made manifest, and the reasoning of tongues shall cease.

3. I am He who can in an instant raise a lowly intellect so high that it may grasp more proofs of the eternal truth than a man who hath studied ten years in the schools.

I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without arrogance of ambition, without strife of arguments.

I am He who teacheth to despise earthly things, to scorn what is present, to seek what is unending, to relish what is eternal, to fly honours, to endure revilings, to place all hope in Me, to desire nothing but Me, and to love Me ardently above all things.

4. Thus, a certain person, by loving Me

with all his heart, learned heavenly things, and spoke wonders.

He made greater progress by renouncing all than by studying subtle questions.

To some indeed I speak general truths, to others what is more particular; to some I sweetly appear by signs and figures, but to others I reveal mysteries in a great light.

The voice of books is the same for all, but it instructeth not all alike; because I am inwardly the teacher of truth, the searcher of hearts, the observer of thoughts, the promoter of good works, dividing to every one as I think fit.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### *That we must not meddle with Outward Things*



Y son, thou shouldst be in many things as if thou wert ignorant, and consider thyself as one dead upon earth, to whom the whole world is crucified.

Thou must also turn a deaf ear to many things, and rather consider those which tend to thy peace.

It is better to turn away thine eyes from things which displease thee, and to let every one have his own opinion, than to break out in contentious words.

If thou findest favour with God, and considerest His judgements, thou wilt easily bear being worsted.

2. O Lord, to what a pass have we come? Behold, men weep for a temporal loss; for a petty gain they toil and run; whereas spiritual damage is soon forgotten; and even in the end doth a man hardly enter into himself.

We apply ourselves to that which profiteth little or nothing, and what is most necessary is heedlessly passed over; for man spendeth himself wholly on outward things, and, unless he promptly recovereth himself, he willingly remaineth entangled in them.

## CHAPTER XLV

*That all Men are not to be believed, and that it is easy to err in Speech*



**G**IVE me help in my trouble, O Lord, *for vain is the salvation of man.*

How often have I found no fidelity, where I thought to be certain of it.

And how frequently have I met with it, where I least expected it!

Vain then is the hope we place in men; but the salvation of the just is in Thee, O God.

Be Thou blessed, O Lord God, in all that befalleth us.

We are weak and fickle; we are easily deceived and changed.

2. Who is the man that can conduct himself in all things so prudently and warily,

as not to fall occasionally into some mistake or perplexity?

He, however, that trusteth in Thee, O Lord, and seeketh Thee with an upright heart, doth not so easily stumble.

And if he should fall into any trouble, no matter how he may be involved, he shall soon be rescued or comforted by Thee; for Thou wilt not abandon to the end him that hopeth in Thee.

Rare indeed is the trusty friend, who remaineth faithful to his friend in all afflictions.

Thou, O Lord, Thou alone art a most faithful friend in all our needs, and there is none like to Thee.

3. Oh! how truly wise was Saint Agatha, who said: My heart is strengthened and founded in Christ.

If it were so with me, the fear of man would not so easily disturb me, nor would sharp words trouble me.

Who can foresee all things? Who can guard against all future evils?

And if even occurrences for which we are prepared often hurt us, what wonder that unexpected events should grievously wound us?

But why did I, miserable man, not act with more foresight? Why, too, did I so lightly give credit to others?

But we are men, and nothing but frail men, though by many we are considered and called angels.

In whom shall I trust, O Lord? in whom but Thee? Thou art the Truth, which can neither deceive nor be deceived.

And, on the contrary, every man is unreliable, weak, fickle, fallible, especially in words, so that we can scarcely believe forthwith even what seemeth true at first sight.

4. How wisely hast Thou forewarned us that we must beware of men, and that *a man's enemies shall be they of his own household*; and that we must not believe him who shall say: *Lo, he is here, or he is there.*

I have been taught to my cost, and would that it might serve to my greater caution and not to my folly!

Be wary, said one, be wary; keep to thyself what I tell thee. And whilst I am silent, and believe it a secret, he himself cannot keep what he wanted to be kept; but presently he betrayeth both himself and me, and is gone.

From such idle gossip and such heedless men preserve me, O Lord, that I may not fall into their hands nor ever do the like.

Put a true and consistent word into my mouth, and keep far from me all crafty tongues.

For I must by all means beware of doing to others what I do not wish to suffer myself.

5. Oh, how good and peaceful it is not to speak of others, nor to believe everything indiscriminately, nor readily to report it

further; but to open our mind to few, ever to seek Thee, O Lord, as the searcher of hearts; not to allow ourselves to be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all which concerneth us, both within and without, may be accomplished according to the good pleasure of Thy will.

Oh, how safe it is for the keeping of heavenly grace to avoid all display before men, and not to desire what seemeth to cause admiration outwardly, but to be assiduous in studying the means of amending our life and increasing our fervour.

To how many hath it been hurtful that their virtue was too soon known and praised?

And to how many others hath it been profitable indeed that the grace which they had received was safeguarded by silence in this perishable life, which is properly styled a temptation and a warfare!



## CHAPTER XLVI

*That we must have Confidence in God when we  
are Attacked with Sharp Words*



Y son, be firm and hope in Me. For what are words but words? They fly through the air, but do not hurt him that is firm and solid like a stone.

If thou art guilty, consider that thou shouldst gladly amend thyself; if thou art not conscious of any fault, think that thou wilt readily suffer this rebuke for God's sake.

Little enough it is that thou shouldst sometimes at least bear with words, since thou art not yet able to suffer hard blows.

And why dost thou take such trifles to heart but because thou art still carnal, and takest more notice of men than thou oughtest?

For as thou art afraid of being despised, thou art not willing to be reproved for thy faults and seekest to justify thyself by excuses.

2. But examine thyself better, and thou wilt find that the world and the vain desire of pleasing men are still alive in thee.

For when thou shrinkest from being humbled and blamed for thy faults, it is evident that thou art neither truly submissive nor truly dead to the world, and that the world is not crucified to thee.

But hear My word, and thou shalt not heed ten thousand words of men.

Behold, if all that could be most maliciously devised were said against thee, what harm could it do thee if thou wouldst simply allow it to pass, and didst not care a straw for it? Could it pull as much as one hair out of thy head?

3. But he that is not recollected in heart, and doth not keep God before his eyes, is easily disturbed by a word of reproof.

Whereas he that trusteth in Me, and doth not want to cling to his own judgement, shall be free from the fear of men.

For I am the judge and the examiner of all that is hidden; I know how all this happened; I know who inflicted the wrong and who suffered it.

This word went forth from Me; I allowed this to happen, that *out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.*

I shall judge the guilty and the innocent; but by a secret judgement I would try them both beforehand.

4. The testimony of man is often misleading: my judgement is true; it shall remain, and not be set aside.

My judgement is generally hidden, and known but to few in detail; yet it never erreth, nor can it err, though it may not appear right in the eyes of foolish mortals.

To Me, therefore, recourse must be had in every judgement, and private opinion should not be depended upon.

For, whatsoever shall befall the just man at God's hand, it shall not make him sad. Although some charge may be unjustly brought against him, he will not heed it much.

Yet neither will he vainly rejoice if he is in fairness excused by others.

For he reflecteth that I am the searcher of hearts and reins, who do not judge by the face nor by the appearance of man.

For that which is considered praiseworthy in the opinion of men is frequently wrong in My sight.

5. O Lord God, just Judge, strong and patient, who knowest man's frailty and wickedness, be Thou my strength and all my hope; for the testimony of my conscience is not sufficient for me.

Thou didst know what I knew not: and hence whenever I was blamed I should have humbled myself and should have borne it meekly.

Graciously forgive me also that I have frequently not acted thus; and grant me once more the grace of greater patience.

It availeth me more to rely upon Thine abundant mercy for obtaining pardon, than upon mine imaginary righteousness for the defence of what is concealed in my conscience.

And although I am not conscious of anything, yet I cannot thereby justify myself; for if Thou withholdest Thy mercy, *no man living shall be justified in Thy sight.*

## CHAPTER XLVII

*That every Hardship must be endured for  
Eternal Life*



**Y** son, do not lose courage in the labours thou hast undertaken for My sake, and be in no wise cast down by tribulation; but let My promise strengthen and comfort thee in every occurrence.

I am able to repay thee beyond all proportion and measure.

Thou shalt not toil here long, nor shalt thou always be oppressed with sorrow.

Wait a little while, and thou shalt soon see the end of these evils.

The hour will come when labour and bustle shall cease.

All that passeth with time is but little and short.

2. Mind what thou art about; labour faithfully in My vineyard, and I shall be Thy reward.

Write, read, sing, groan, be silent, pray, courageously endure adversity; eternal life is well worth these, and even greater efforts.

Peace will come in the day which is known to the Lord; and there shall no longer be a day and a night as at the present time, but an everlasting light, an infinite brightness, a firm peace and a secure rest.

Then Thou wilt not say: *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Nor wilt Thou exclaim: *Woe is me that my sojourning is prolonged.* For *death shall be cast down headlong;* and there shall be unfailing salvation, no anxiety, a blessed joy and a sweet and graceful company.

3. Oh, hadst thou but seen the never-fading crowns of the saints in heaven, and what glory they now enjoy, who formerly seemed to the world contemptible and as it were unworthy to live; thou wouldst indeed forthwith humble thyself to the dust, and prefer to be subject to all rather than to preside even over one.

And thou wouldst not desire happy days in this life, but rather rejoice in being afflicted for God's sake, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be considered of no account amongst men.

4. Oh, if these things were palatable to thee, and sank deeply into thy heart, how wouldst thou dare to complain even once?

Should not every hardship be endured for eternal life?

It is no small matter to lose or to gain the kingdom of God.

Lift up therefore thy face to heaven. Behold, I, and with Me all My saints, who had a hard struggle in this world, now rejoice; now they are comforted, now they are secure, now they are at rest, and they shall dwell with Me for ever in the Kingdom of My Father.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

*Of the Day of Eternity and the Anxieties of this Life*

HAPPY home of the heavenly city! O bright day of eternity, not darkened by night, but ever illumined by the sovereign truth; day always joyful, always secure, never changing, but always continuing in the same state!

Oh, would that this day had dawned, and that all these temporal things had come to an end!

To the saints indeed it shineth, glittering with an eternal radiance; but only afar off and as if through a glass, to pilgrims here on earth.

2. The heavenly citizens know how joyful that day is; but we banished children of Eve lament that the present day is bitter and wearisome.

Short and evil, full of sorrows and difficulties are our days here on earth, where man is defiled by many sins, entangled in many passions, pursued by many fears, engaged in many cares, distracted by many novelties, involved in many vanities, encompassed with many errors, crushed by many labours; where he is wearied by temptation, weakened by pleasure, tormented by want.

3. Oh, when shall I see the end of these evils? When shall I be delivered from the miserable slavery of sin?

O Lord, when shall I be mindful of Thee alone? When shall I rejoice in Thee to the full?

When shall I obtain true freedom, without any hindrance, without any trouble of body or soul?

When shall I enjoy perfect peace, peace undisturbed and safe, peace within and without, peace every way secure?

O good Jesus, when shall I stand to see Thee? When shall I behold the glory of Thy kingdom? When wilt Thou be to me all in all?

Oh, when shall I be with Thee in Thy kingdom, which Thou hast prepared for Thy friends from all eternity?

I am left poor and exiled in a hostile country, where there are daily wars and great misfortunes.

4. Alleviate my banishment, stem my grief, because I long for Thee with all my heart. And all that this world offereth for my comfort, is burdensome to me.

I wish to enjoy Thee in my inmost heart, but I cannot reach Thee.

I desire to occupy myself with the things of heaven: but temporal cares and mine unmortified passions pull me down to the earth.

With the soul I wish to rise above all

things: but the body compelleth me to be subject to them reluctantly.

Thus, unhappy man that I am, I fight against myself, and am become burdensome to myself, as the spirit tendeth upwards, and the flesh downwards.

5. Oh, what do I inwardly suffer, when I apply my mind to heavenly things, and presently numerous carnal thoughts occur to me in prayer!

O God, *be not Thou far from me, decline not in Thy wrath from Thy servant.*

*Send forth lightning and scatter them; shoot out thine arrows;* and let all the illusions of the enemy be confounded.

Recall my mind to Thee; make me forget all worldly things; grant that I may speedily reject and despise the suggestions of evil.

Assist me, O eternal truth, that no vanity may influence me.

Come, O Heavenly Sweetness, and let all uncleanness flee before Thy face.

Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive me that I am often occupied with other things but Thee in prayer.

For in truth I confess that I am generally very distracted.

Frequently, indeed, I am not there in heart, where I bodily stand or sit; but I am rather there where my thoughts carry me.

I am where my thoughts are; and my thoughts are mostly where that is which I love.



That which naturally delighteth me, or generally pleaseth me, readily cometh to my mind.

6. Hence Thou, O sovereign Truth, hast plainly said: *Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.*

If I love heaven, I find pleasure in contemplating heavenly things.

If I love the world, I rejoice in its prosperity, and grieve for its adversity.

If I love the flesh, carnal thoughts often occur to my mind.

If I love the spirit, I delight in considering what is spiritual.

For I willingly speak and hear of whatsoever I love, and bring images of the same with me home, that is, into mine inmost heart.

But blessed is the man who, for Thy sake, O Lord, discardeth all creatures; who doth violence to nature; who crucifieth the lusts of the flesh by the fervour of the spirit; that, with a pure conscience, he may offer Thee an undistracted prayer; and that, banishing all earthly things, both within and without, he may be worthy to unite with the choirs of angels.

## CHAPTER XLIX

*Of the Desire of Eternal Life, and of the great Reward promised to Valiant Warriors*

ON, when thou perceivest that the desire of eternal happiness is infused into thee from on high, and thou longest to depart from the tabernacle of thy body, that thou mayest behold my brightness without shadow of change; expand thy heart, and receive this holy inspiration with great eagerness.

Give thy heartfelt thanks to the Sovereign Goodness, which treateth thee so kindly, visiteth thee so mercifully, exciteth thee so ardently, and raiseth thee so powerfully, lest by thine own weight thou cling to earthly things.

For thou dost not conceive this desire by thine own reflection or effort, but only by the favour of heavenly grace and the goodness of God; that thou mayest advance in virtue, especially in humility, and prepare thyself for future conflicts; and strive to follow Me with all the affection of thy heart, and to serve Me with a fervent will.

2. Son, just as the fire often burneth, but the flame riseth not without smoke; so there are some who ardently long for

heavenly things, and yet they are not free from the taint of sensual affection.

And so it happeneth that they do not purely seek the glory of God in that which they ask so fervently of Him.

Such is also often thy desire, which, as thou sayest, is so ardent.

Yet that is not pure and perfect, which is mixed with self-gratification.

3. Ask not what is pleasing and useful to thee, but what is agreeable to Me, and tendeth to Mine honour; for if thou judgest rightly, thou must prefer and accomplish My will rather than anything thou wishest or desirest.

I know thy longing, and have often heard thy sighs.

Already thou wouldst enjoy the liberty of the glory of the children of God; already thou takest delight in mine eternal home, and the heavenly kingdom filled with gladness; but that hour is not yet come: there is still another time for thee, that is, a time of war, a time of toil and of trial.

Thou wishest to be satiated with the Sovereign Good, but thou canst not reach it yet.

It is I: wait for Me, saith the Lord, till the kingdom of God come.

4. Thou must still be tried on earth, and exercised in many ways.

Comfort shall sometimes be given thee, but its full abundance shall not be granted.

Take courage, therefore, and be very

valiant, as well in accomplishing as in suffering what is against thine inclination.

Thou must put on the new man, and be changed into another person.

Thou must often do what thou wouldst rather not do, and leave undone what thou wouldst rather do.

What pleaseth others shall succeed; but what pleaseth thee shall make no progress.

What others say shall be listened to; but what thou sayest shall be considered worthless.

Others shall ask and receive; but thou shalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others shall be greatly praised by men; but thou shalt be passed over in silence.

To others some office or other shall be committed; but thou shalt be thought fit for nothing.

Nature will sometimes repine in consequence; and it will be a great thing if thou canst silently bear it.

In these and many similar ways a faithful servant of the Lord is generally tried, to see if he can deny himself and overcome himself in all things.

There is scarcely anything in which thou must mortify thyself more than in seeing and suffering what is contrary to thy will; especially when thou art commanded to do what appeareth to thee inconvenient or useless.

And because, living in obedience, thou darest not resist authority, it seemeth hard to thee to do the will of another, and wholly to abandon thine own judgement.

6. But consider, O my son, the fruit of these labours, their speedy termination, and their exceeding great reward, and thou shalt experience no trouble from them, but rather derive great consolation from thy patience.

Because, for a little of thine own will, which thou now freely renoucest, thou shalt always have thy will in heaven.

There indeed thou shalt find all thou wilt, and all thou canst desire.

There thou shalt have the enjoyment of every good, without fear of losing it.

There thy will, ever united to Mine, shall have no incongruous or selfish desire.

There none shall resist thee, none shall complain of thee, none shall hinder thee, none shall thwart thee; but all that thou desirest shall be at once before thee, and fully satisfy the longing of thy heart and fill it up to the brim.

There I shall give thee glory for the insults thou hast suffered: a garment of praise for thy grief, and for the lowest place a royal throne for ever.

There the fruit of obedience shall appear, works of penance shall give pleasure, and humble submission shall be gloriously crowned.

7. At present, therefore, humbly bend thyself under the hand of all, and heed not who it was that said or commanded this. But let it be thy chief care, that, whether thy superior, or inferior, or equal, requir-eth some service of thee or intimateth his wish, thou take it all in good part and endeavour to comply with perfect willingness.

Let one seek this, and another that; let one glory in this, and another in that, and let him be praised thousands of times; as for thee, rejoyce neither in this, nor in that, but only in the contempt of thyself, and in My good pleasure and honour.

This is what thou shouldst desire: that whether by thy life, or by thy death, God may always be glorified in thee.

## CHAPTER L

### *How a Man in Desolation should commit Himself into the Hands of God*



LORD GOD, holy Father, be Thou now and for ever blessed, because according to Thy will it hath been done, and what Thou doest is good.

Let Thy servant rejoyce in Thee, not in himself, or in any other: for Thou alone art my true delight, Thou art

my hope and my crown, my joy and my glory, O Lord!

What doth Thy servant possess, but what he hath received from Thee, even without any merit of his own?

It is all Thine, both what Thou hast given, and what Thou hast made.

*I am poor and in labours from my youth;* and sometimes my soul is sorrowful even unto tears; sometimes also it is inwardly troubled by reason of impending suffering.

2. I long for the joy of peace, I plead for the peace of Thy children, who are gratified by Thee in the light of consolation.

If Thou grantest peace, if Thou infusest holy joy, the soul of Thy servant will assiduously sing to Thee, and devoutly praise Thee.

But if Thou withdrawest Thyself, as Thou very often doest, Thy servant will not be able to run the way of Thy commandments; but he will rather bend his knees and strike his breast, because it is not with him as yesterday and the day before, when Thy lamp shined over his head, and he was protected from threatening attacks under the shadow of Thy wings.

3. O just Father, who art ever to be praised, the hour is come for Thy servant to be tried. O amiable Father, it is meet that in this hour Thy servant should suffer something for Thy sake.

O ever adorable Father, the hour is come

which Thou hast foreseen from all eternity, that for a short time thy servant should faint outwardly, though he ever liveth inwardly with Thee.

That for a little while he should be slighted, humbled and forsaken by men; that he should be crushed by suffering and sickness; that so he may rise again with Thee in the dawn of a new light, and be glorified in heaven.

O holy Father, Thou hast so appointed and wished it; and what Thou didst command hath happened.

4. For this is a favour Thou bestowest on Thy friend, that he may endure suffering and affliction in this world for the love of Thee, at whatever time and by whatever creature Thou allowest it to be done.

Without Thy will and knowledge, and without purposes, nothing happeneth on earth.

*It is good for me, O Lord, that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy justifications, and renounce all inward haughtiness and presumption.*

It is profitable for me that shame hath covered my face, that so I may seek my consolation in Thee rather than in men.

I have also learned thereby to dread Thine unsearchable judgements; for Thou afflictest both the just and the wicked, yet not without equity and justice.

5. Thanks be to Thee, because Thou hast not refrained from punishing my sins, but



hast chastised me with bitter stripes, inflicting pain and causing anguish, both within and without.

Of all things under heaven, there is none that can comfort me, but Thou, O Lord my God, the heavenly physician of souls, who *scourgest and savest*, who *ledest down to hell, and bringest up again*.

Thy discipline is upon me, and Thy rod shall teach me.

6. Behold, O beloved Father, I am in Thy hands, I bow myself under the rod of Thy correction.

Strike my back and my neck, that I may bend my wantonness to Thy will.

Make me one of Thy dutiful and humble disciples, as Thou hast often done before, that I may walk wholly according to Thy will.

I entrust myself and all that is mine to Thy correction: it is better to be chastised here than hereafter.

Thou knowest all, both in general and in particular; and nothing in man's conscience is hidden from Thee.

*Thou knowest all things before they come to pass*, and Thou hast no need that anyone should inform or warn Thee of what taketh place on earth.

Thou knowest what is expedient for my progress; and how useful tribulation is to cleanse me from the rust of my sins.

Do with me according to Thy good pleasure, and look not at my sinful life, known

to none so well or so clearly as to Thee alone.

7. Grant, O Lord, that I may know what I ought to know, love what I ought to love, praise what is most pleasing to Thee, esteem what seemeth precious to Thee, and blame what is contemptible in Thy sight.

Suffer not that I should judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor decide according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men: but grant that I may judge with true discretion, both of temporal and spiritual things; and that above all I may ever seek what is agreeable to Thy will.

8. Men are often deceived in judging by the evidence of the senses; worldlings are likewise deceived in loving none but visible things.

Doth it make a man better, that he is highly esteemed by another man?

One deceiver beguileth another, one vain man another, one blind man another, one sick man another, by praising him; and in truth he rather disgraceth him by his flattery.

For, what a man is in Thy sight, O Lord, that he is, and no more, saith the humble Saint Francis.

## CHAPTER LI

*That we must apply Ourselves to Lowly Occupations, when we have lost the Aptitude for Higher Exercises*



Y son, thou canst not always experience the same fervour in the practice of virtue, nor remain in a high state of contemplation; but owing to the corruption of original sin, thou must needs sometimes descend to earthly things; and thou must bear the burden of this corruptible life, though it be with reluctance and weariness.

So long as thou carriest a mortal body, thou shalt experience annoyance, and heaviness of heart.

Hence, whilst thou art in the flesh, thou must often bewail the burden of the flesh; because thou canst not constantly occupy thyself with spiritual exercises and divine contemplation.

2. At such times it is expedient for thee to have recourse to lowly and outward occupations, and to invigorate thyself by good works; to await My coming and heavenly visitation with firm confidence; to bear patiently thy banishment and dryness of heart; till thou art again visited by Me, and delivered from all thine anxieties.

I will spread out before thee the meadows of the Scriptures, that with enlarged heart, thou mayest begin to run the way of My commandments.

And thou shalt say: *The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*

## CHAPTER LII

*That a Man ought not to consider himself Deserving of Consolation, but rather of Stripes*



ORD, I am not worthy of Thy consolation, nor of any spiritual visitation; and hence Thou dealest justly with me when Thou leavest me poor and desolate.

Even were I able to shed a sea of tears, still I should not be worthy of Thy consolation.

I have indeed deserved nought else but to be scourged and punished, because I have grievously and frequently offended Thee, and in many ways greatly sinned.

So that, considering all things well, I am not worthy of the least comfort.

But Thou, O clement and merciful God, dost not wish that Thy works should perish: and to show the riches of Thy goodness on the vessels of mercy, Thou vouchsafest to console Thy servant in a superhuman manner even without any merit of his own.

For I will cause thee to forget thy labours,  
and to enjoy inward rest.

For Thy comforts do not resemble human  
blandishments.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that Thou  
shouldst bestow any heavenly favour upon  
me?

I do not remember that I have done any  
good, but, on the contrary, that I have always  
been prone to sin and slow to amend.

This is true, and I cannot deny it. If I  
should speak otherwise, Thou wouldst with-  
stand me, and there would be none to de-  
fend me.

What have I deserved for my sins but hell  
and everlasting fire?

In truth I confess that I am deserving of all  
scorn and contempt, and that I am not worthy  
to be numbered among Thy devout servants.

And although I am loth to hear this, yet  
for truth's sake I will censure myself for  
my sins, that so I may more easily deserve  
to obtain Thy mercy.

3. What shall I say, guilty and full of all  
confusion as I am?

I have no mouth to speak but only this  
word: I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned:  
have pity on me and forgive me.

*Suffer me that I may lament my sorrow a little,  
before I go to a land that is dark and covered  
with the mist of death.*

What more dost Thou require of a guilty  
and wretched sinner than that he should

repent and humble himself for his offences?

In true contrition and humiliation of heart the hope of forgiveness taketh its rise, the troubled conscience is reconciled, lost grace is recovered, man is screened from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent soul meet together in a holy embrace.

4. Humble contrition for sin is to Thee, O Lord, a pleasing sacrifice, yielding in Thy presence an odour far sweeter than the fumes of incense.

This is also the acceptable ointment which thou wouldst see poured out upon Thy sacred feet; for a contrite and humble heart Thou hast never despised.

A contrite heart is the place of refuge from the wrath of the enemy. Here is amended and cleansed whatsoever hath become elsewhere infected and defiled.

## CHAPTER LIII

*That the Grace of God is not granted to them  
that relish Earthly Things*



ON, My grace is precious, and suffereth no mixing with any alloy or with earthly comforts.

Thou must therefore reject all hindrances to grace, if thou wouldst obtain its in-

fusion.

Look for retirement, love to be in solitude,

seek no one's company; but rather pour out a devout prayer to God that thou mayest preserve a contrite heart and a pure conscience.

Make no account of the whole world; prefer communing with God to all outward occupations.

For thou canst not be occupied with Me, and at the same time delight in transitory things.

It behoveth thee to be estranged from acquaintance and friends, and to keep thy heart free from all temporal comfort; as the apostle Saint Peter beseecheth the faithful of Christ that they refrain themselves *from carnal desires, as strangers and pilgrims* in this world.

2. Oh, what confidence will he have at death, who is not detained by his attachment to anything here below.

But an imperfect soul doth not yet know what it is to have a heart thus disengaged from all things; nor doth the sensual man understand the liberty of the inward man.

Yet if he would be truly spiritual, he must renounce both near and distant relations; and beware of none more than of himself.

If thou perfectly overcomest thyself, thou shalt very easily subdue all the rest.

To triumph over thyself is a perfect victory.

For he that keepeth himself in such subjection that his sensuality is obedient to reason, and his reason in all things to Me,

is truly conqueror of himself and lord of the world.

3. If thou art burning with desire to reach this high degree of perfection, it behoveth thee to begin courageously and to lay the axe to the root, that thou mayest eradicate and destroy thy secret unruly attachment both to thyself and to every private and material good.

Almost all that must be radically overcome in man springeth from this defect, that he loveth himself inordinately; and when this failing hath been subdued and conquered, great peace and tranquillity will presently ensue.

But as there are but few who labour to die perfectly to themselves, and men generally do not strive to renounce themselves entirely, therefore they remain entangled in themselves, and cannot rise above themselves in spirit.

He, however, that wisheth to walk freely with Me must mortify all his bad and unruly affections and not cling inordinately, by particular love, to any creature.



## CHAPTER LIV

*Of the Different Movements of Nature and Grace*

**Y**son, carefully observe the movements of nature and grace, for they are influenced in a very different, yet subtle, manner, so that they can scarcely be distinguished but by a man who is well versed in the spiritual life and inwardly enlightened.

All, indeed, desire what seemeth good, and aim at some good in their words and actions; and so it cometh to pass that many are deceived by the appearance of good.

Nature is crafty and attracteth, ensnareth and deceiveth many, and always hath itself for object.

But grace walketh in simplicity, avoideth all appearance of evil, maketh use of no deceit, and doeth everything purely for God, in whom it resteth as in its last end.

2. Nature is loth to die; it will not be harassed, nor overcome, nor subjected, nor readily subdued.

But grace attendeth to self-mortification, resisteth sensuality, seeketh subjection, wisheth to be surpassed, and will not take advantage of its liberty; grace loveth to be kept under restraint, and doth not desire to rule over others: but ever to live, to re-

main and to be subject to God; and is ready to submit with humility to every human creature for God's sake.

3. Nature worketh for its own advantage and considereth what profit it may derive from others.

But grace regardeth not what is useful or agreeable to itself, but rather what is profitable to many.

Nature gladly receiveth praise and honour.

But grace faithfully attributeth all honour and glory to God.

4. Nature dreadeth shame and contempt.

But grace rejoiceth in suffering reproach for the name of Jesus.

Nature loveth leisure and corporal rest.

But grace cannot be idle, and willingly undertaketh work.

Nature seeketh to have singular and fine things: it recoileth from what is mean and coarse.

But grace delighteth in what is plain and poor, despiseth not what is rough, and shrinketh not from wearing old clothes.

Nature regardeth temporal things, rejoiceth in earthly gain and grieveth for loss; it is provoked by the least injurious word.

But grace aimeth at things eternal, is not attached to temporal things nor troubled at their loss, nor embittered by rude words; for it placeth its treasure and its joy in heaven, where nothing perisheth.

5. Nature is covetous and would rather take than give; it liketh to have things for its personal and private use.

But grace is kind and communicative, avoideth what is peculiar, is satisfied with little, and considereth it *more blessed to give than to receive*.

Nature inclineth a man to creatures, to his own body, to vanities and to roaming abroad.

But grace draweth to God and virtue, renounceth creatures, shunneth the world, hateth the lusts of the flesh, restraineth wandering, is shy to appear in public.

Nature liketh to have some outward comfort in which it findeth sensual pleasure.

But grace seeketh to be comforted in God alone, and to delight in the Sovereign Good above all visible things.

6. Nature doeth everything for its own advantage and convenience; it can do nothing for nought, but hopeth to obtain something equivalent or better, or praise, or favour for good deeds, and desireth that its works and its gifts should be highly valued.

But grace seeketh nothing temporal, and requireth no other recompense but God alone for its reward; and wanteth no temporal commodities but for as much as they may serve to obtain everlasting goods.

7. Nature rejoiceth in many friends and kinsfolk, glories in high rank and ancestry, smileth on the mighty, flattereth the rich, applaudeth equals.

But grace loveth even enemies, is not puffed up with a crowd of friends, nor esteemeth home or birth, unless accompanied with greater virtue; grace showeth more favour to the poor than to the rich, sympathizeth more with the lowly than with the mighty, rejoiceth with the truthful not with the deceitful; grace ever encourageth the good to be zealous for the better gifts, and to imitate the Son of God by the practice of virtue.

Nature readily complaineth of want and inconvenience. Grace beareth poverty with constancy.

8. Nature turneth everything to its own advantage; it striveth and argueth for itself.

But grace referreth all things to God, from whom they originally proceed; it attributeth no good to itself, boasteth not rashly, disputeth not, nor preferreth its own impression to that of others; but submitteth itself as regards every sentiment and opinion to the eternal wisdom and the judgement of God.

Nature desireth to know secrets and to hear news; it wisheth to appear abroad and to have many pleasant impressions through the senses; it liketh to be noticed and to do things by which it may win praise and admiration.

But grace careth not to learn novelties or marvels, for all this proceedeth from the

old leaven of original sin, as there is nothing new or lasting on earth.

Thus grace teacheth us to restrain the senses, to avoid vain complacency and ostentation, humbly to hide what deserveth praise or admiration, and to seek in every object and in every science the fruit of utility and the honour and glory of God.

Grace doth not want itself or its works to be applauded, but wisheth that God, who giveth all through mere charity, should be blessed in His gifts.

9. This grace is a supernatural light and a special gift of God; it is properly the mark of the elect and the pledge of eternal salvation; it raiseth man from the love of earthly things to that of heavenly, and from carnal maketh him spiritual.

Hence, in proportion as nature is subdued and conquered, grace is infused; and by fresh visitations the inward man is daily more transformed into the likeness of God.

## CHAPTER LV

*Of the Corruption of Nature and the Efficacy of Divine Grace*

**L**ORD my God, who hast created me to Thine own image and likeness, grant me this grace, which Thou hast declared to be so great and so necessary for salvation, that I may overcome my corrupt nature which leadeth me to sin and to perdition.

For I feel in my flesh *the law of sin fighting against the law of my mind and captivating me*, so as to obey sensuality in many things; and I cannot resist its lusts, unless assisted by Thy holy grace abundantly infused into my heart.

Thy grace, yea, Thy copious grace, is needed to overcome nature, which from youth is ever prone to evil.

2. For as human nature fell and was corrupted by the sin of the first man Adam, the penalty of this taint hath passed to all men; so that nature itself, which was created by Thee good and virtuous, is now taken for vice and the weakness of corrupt nature; because, if left to itself, it hath a tendency to evil and to earthly things.

For the little strength which remaineth is but as a spark hidden under the ashes.

This is our natural reason enveloped in

great darkness, still able to judge of good and evil and to distinguish between truth and falsehood, though it is unable to accomplish all it approveth, and enjoyeth no longer the full light of the truth nor the soundness of its inclinations.

3. Hence it is, O my God, that *I am delighted with Thy law according to the inward man*, knowing Thy commandment to be holy, just and good, condemning likewise all evil and sin, which must be shunned.

*But with the flesh I serve the law of sin*, when I obey sensuality rather than reason.

And hence it is that *to will that which is good is present with me, but to accomplish it I find not*.

Thus I often form many good resolutions; but when Thy grace is wanting to help my weakness, a slight opposition maketh me recoil and fail.

So it cometh to pass that I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough how I ought to act; but, bowed down under the weight of mine own corruption, I do not rise to greater perfection.

4. O Lord, Thy grace is indispensable for me, to begin, to continue and to finish what is good.

For without it I can do nothing; but I can do all things in Thee, when Thy grace strengtheneth me.

It is truly a heavenly grace, without which we can acquire no merit, and the gifts of nature are of no account.

Arts, riches, beauty or strength, talents or eloquence, are of no value in Thy sight, O Lord, without grace.

For the gifts of nature are common to good and bad; but grace, or charity, is the special gift of the elect, and they that are distinguished by it are accounted worthy of eternal life.

This grace is so excellent, that neither the gift of prophecy, nor the working of miracles, nor the loftiest contemplation, is of any account without it.

Yea, not even faith, nor hope, nor any other virtue, is pleasing to Thee without charity and grace.

5. O most blessed grace, which makest the poor in spirit rich in virtue, and renderest him who possesseth many goods humble of heart!

Come, come down to me, fill me early with Thy consolation, lest my soul faint by reason of the weariness and dryness of my heart.

I beseech Thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in Thy sight: for Thy grace is sufficient for me, though I should not obtain the other gifts which nature coveteth.

Though I were tempted and harassed with many troubles, yet I will fear no evils, whilst Thy grace is with me.

For it is my strength; it giveth me counsel and help; it is more powerful than all mine enemies, and wiser than all the sages.



6. Thy grace is the teacher of truth, the adviser of restraint, the light of the heart, and a comfort in anguish; it putteth sadness to flight, taketh away fear, fostereth devotion and causeth tears to flow.

What am I without it but a dry tree and a useless stem, fit only to be cast away?

Let therefore Thy grace, O Lord, ever precede and follow me, and let it make me continually intent on good works, through Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen.

## CHAPTER LVI

*That we must deny ourselves, and imitate Christ by the Cross*



Y son, in proportion as thou canst leave thyself, thou wilt be able to approach Me.

Just as to desire nothing without, produceth peace within; so self-renunciation within, uniteth man with

God.

I want thee to learn perfect abandonment of thyself to My will, without objection or complaint.

Follow Me: I am the way and the truth and the life.

Without the way thou canst not walk; without the truth thou canst not know; without the life thou canst not live.

I am the way thou must follow, the truth

thou must believe, the life thou must expect.

I am the unerring way, the infallible truth, the never-ending life.

I am the straightest way, the sovereign truth, the real life, the blessed life, the un-created life.

If thou abidest in My way, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt lay hold on eternal life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

If thou wilt know the truth, believe Me.

If thou wilt be perfect, sell all thou hast.

If thou wilt be My disciple, deny thyself.

If thou wilt possess the blessed life, despise the present life.

If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thyself on earth.

If thou wilt reign with Me, carry the cross with Me.

For only the servants of the cross find the way of blessedness and of true light.

3. O Lord Jesus, as Thy life seemed wretched and contemptible to the world, grant that I may follow Thee with the world's contempt.

For the servant is not greater than his lord, nor the disciple above the master.

Let Thy servant be trained in Thy life, for therein is my salvation, and true holiness.

Whatsoever I read or hear besides that, doth not fully gratify or delight me.

4. Son, as thou knowest these things and hast read them all, thou shalt be blessed if thou doest them.

He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him, and will make him sit with Me in the kingdom of My Father.

5. O Lord Jesus, according to what Thou hast said and promised, so let it be done indeed, and grant that I may obtain it.

I have taken up the cross, I have taken it from Thy hand, I will carry it, yea, carry it until death, even as Thou hast laid it upon me.

Truly, the life of a good religious is a cross, but it leadeth to paradise.

We have started; it is not lawful to turn back, and abandon our state.

6. Come, brethren, let us go forward together; Jesus will be with us.

For Jesus' sake we have taken up this cross; let us for Jesus' sake continue to carry the cross.

He that guideth us and precedeth us will be our helper.

Behold, our King goeth before us, He will fight for us.

Let us follow courageously; let no one fear any alarm; let us be ready to die manfully in battle; and let us not stain our glory by fleeing from the cross.

## CHAPTER LVII

*That a Man should not be too much Discouraged when he falleth into some Faults*



Y son, patience and humility in adversity please Me more than great comfort and devotion in prosperity.

Why doth it afflict thee that a little fault is laid to thy charge?

Even had it been more serious, thou shouldst not have been disturbed.

But now let it pass; it is not the first, neither is it new, nor will it be the last if thou shouldst live long.

Thou art brave enough, so long as thou meetest with no adversity.

Thou canst also give good advice, and encourage others with kind words; but when some unexpected trouble cometh to thy door, counsel and strength fail thee.

Observe the great frailty which thou often experiencest in little difficulties; yet it is for thy salvation that these and similar things happen to thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart as best thou canst; and if it hath affected thee, let it not cast thee down, nor disturb thee long.

At least bear it patiently, if thou canst not do so cheerfully.

Although thou dost not like to hear it, and feelest within thyself some resentment, re-

strain thyself, and suffer no unseemly word to come out of thy mouth, whereby the weak might be scandalized.

The storm which hath arisen will soon abate; and the inward pain will be soothed, when grace returneth.

I still live, saith the Lord, ready to help thee, and to comfort thee in a more than usual degree, if thou puttest thy trust in Me, and devoutly callest upon Me.

3. Be of good heart, and gird thyself to greater endurance.

All is not lost, though thou often feelest thyself troubled or grievously tempted.

Thou art a man, and not God; thou art flesh, not an angel.

How couldst thou always remain in the same state of fervour, when this was wanting to the angels in heaven, and to the first man in paradise?

I am He that comforteth with health those that mourn; and I lift up to My divinity those that acknowledge their frailty.

4. Lord, blessed be Thy word, which is sweeter to my mouth than honey and the honeycomb.

What should I do in my dire troubles and straits, didst not Thou comfort me with Thy holy exhortations?

Provided I arrive at length at the haven of salvation, what doth it matter how great and numerous my sufferings may be?

Grant me a good end; grant me a happy passage out of this world.

Remember me, O my God, and lead me by the right way to Thy kingdom. Amen.

## CHAPTER LVIII

*That we must not pry into sublime truths, nor into the hidden judgements of God*



Y son, beware of discussing lofty subjects, or the hidden judgements of God: why this man is so forsaken, and that man is raised to such favour; or why this one is so much afflicted and that one so highly exalted.

These things surpass all human understanding, and no reason or discussion availeth to search into the judgements of God.

When, therefore, the enemy suggesteth these thoughts to thee, or when some curious persons question thee, answer them with these words of the prophet: *Thou art just, O Lord, and Thy judgement is right.*

And again: *The judgements of the Lord are true, justified in themselves.*

My judgements must be feared, not discussed, because they are beyond the reach of the human intellect.

2. Neither shouldst thou investigate or discuss the merits of the Saints, which of

them is the holier, or who is the greater in the kingdom of heaven.

Such things often produce strifes and useless contentions; they also foster pride and vainglory, whence arise envy and discord, when one proudly trieth to gain a preference for one Saint, and another for another.

There is no advantage in wishing to know and to find out such things; but it is rather displeasing to the Saints; for I am not the God of dissension but of peace; and this peace consisteth in true humility rather than in self-conceit.

3. Some persons have a special devotion to one or other Saint for whom they feel a greater affection, but this is more human than divine.

I am He who made all the Saints; I granted them grace, I gave them glory.

I know the merits of each; I visited them with the blessings of My sweetness.

I have known My friends before all ages; I have chosen them out of the world, they have not first chosen Me.

I have called them by My grace; I have attracted them by My mercy; I have led them through various temptations.

I have imparted to them marvellous consolations; I have given them perseverance; I have crowned their patience.

4. I know the first and the last; I embrace them all with unutterable love.

I am to be praised in all My Saints; I am to be blessed above all and honoured in each of them, whom I have so gloriously exalted, and chosen without any previous merits of their own.

He, therefore, that despiseth one of the least of My Saints, doth not honour the greatest; for I made the little and the great.

And he that disparageth any of the Saints also disparageth Me, and all the other Saints in the kingdom of heaven.

They are all one by the bond of charity; they have but one sentiment, but one will; and they all love one another in concord.

5. And, beyond all this, they love Me more than themselves and their merits.

For as they are rapt above themselves, and disengaged from self-love, they are wholly transported into the love of Me, in which they delightfully rest.

Nothing can distract or depress them; for, being filled with the eternal truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable charity.

Let, therefore, carnal and sensual men, who can love nothing but their own gratifications, forbear to dispute of the glory of the Saints, which they diminish or increase according to their liking, not as it is decreed by the eternal truth.

6. Many act thus in ignorance, especially those who, being but little enlightened, scarcely know how to love anyone with a purely spiritual affection.



They are still greatly attracted to some or other persons by natural inclination and human friendship; and they imagine that everything is done in heaven as here below.

But there is an incomparable difference between what imperfect men fancy and what enlightened persons contemplate by heavenly revelation.

7. Beware then, My son, of examining with curiosity things that are beyond thy ken; but rather make it thine aim and business, that thou mayest be found even the least in the kingdom of God.

And if anyone knew who is holier or greater than another in the kingdom of heaven, what would this knowledge avail him, unless he humbled himself the more before Me by that information, and gave greater praise to My name?

He who reflecteth on the greatness of his sins and the littleness of his virtues, and on the distance which separateth him from the perfection of the Saints, doeth what is far more pleasing to God than he who discusseth the greater or lesser degree of their glory.

It is better to invoke the Saints with devout prayers and tears, and to implore their glorious intercession with an humble heart, than to search into their secrets by vain curiosity.

8. They are well, yea, exceedingly well contented; would that men could also content themselves and refrain from vain discourses.

The Saints do not boast of their own merits; for they attribute no good to themselves, but all to Me; because I have given them all in My boundless charity.

They are filled with such divine love and such overflowing joy, that nothing is wanting to them in glory, nor do they lack anything to complete their happiness.

The more exalted the Saints are in glory, the more lowly they are in themselves, and the nearer and dearer to Me.

Hence thou findest written that *they cast their crowns before God, and fell down on their faces before the Lamb, and adored Him that liveth for ever and ever.*

9. Many inquire who is greater in the kingdom of God, not knowing whether they are worthy to be numbered among the least.

It is a great thing to be even the least in heaven, where all are great; because all *shall be called* and shall be indeed the *Children of God.*

*The least shall be as a thousand, and the sinner of a hundred years shall die.*

For when the disciples asked who was the greater in the kingdom of heaven, they received this answer: *Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is greater in the kingdom of heaven.*

10. Woe to them that refuse to humble themselves willingly with the little children, for

the low gate of the heavenly kingdom shall not allow them to enter.

Woe also to the rich who have here their consolation, for when the poor shall enter into the kingdom of God they shall be left lamenting without.

Rejoice ye humble, and ye poor be filled with gladness, *for yours is the kingdom of God*, provided you walk in the truth.

## CHAPTER LIX

*That we must put all our Hope and Trust in God alone*



ORD, what is the confidence which I have in this life, or what is my greatest consolation among all things that appear under heaven?

Is it not Thou, O Lord my God, whose mercy is infi-

nite?

Where was it well with me without Thee? Or could it ever go ill when Thou wast with me?

I had rather be poor for Thy sake than rich without Thee.

I choose rather to be a pilgrim on earth with Thee than to possess heaven without Thee.

Where Thou art, there is heaven; and death and hell are there where Thou art not.

It is Thee I desire; and hence it is for Thee I must needs sigh, call and entreat.

Finally, there is none in whom I can fully trust, none that can give me timely help in my needs but Thou alone, O my God!

Thou art my hope, Thou art my trust, my comforter and my most faithful friend in all occurrences.

2. All seek the things that are their own; Thou aimest solely at my salvation and at my perfection, and turnest all things to my good.

Although Thou exposest me to divers temptations and adversities, yet Thou, who art wont to try Thy friends in a thousand ways, disposest this also to mine advantage.

And when Thou triest me thus, Thou art no less to be loved and praised than if Thou didst fill me with heavenly comfort.

3. In Thee, therefore, O Lord God, I place all my hope and my refuge; to Thee I entrust all my trouble and anguish; for I find that all is weak and inconstant whatsoever I behold besides Thee.

For many friends cannot be serviceable, nor can strong helpers avail, nor prudent advisers give a useful answer, nor the books of learned men procure consolation, nor any precious treasure deliver, nor any retired and pleasant place afford shelter; unless Thou dost Thyself assist, help, comfort, console, instruct and guard us.

4. For when Thou art absent, all that seemeth to tend to the attainment of peace and happiness is nothing, and can in reality not contribute to our felicity.

Thou, therefore, art the end of all good, and the height of life, and the depth of eloquence; and to hope in Thee above all things is the noblest comfort of Thy servants.

To Thee I lift up mine eyes, in Thee I trust, O my God, Father of mercies!

Hallow and sanctify my soul with Thy heavenly blessing that it may become Thy holy habitation and the seat of Thine eternal glory; and that nothing may be found in the temple of Thy dignity which can offend the eyes of Thy majesty.

According to the greatness of Thy goodness and the multitude of Thy tender mercies look upon me and hear the prayer of Thy poor servant, who is an exile far away in the land of the shadow of death.

Protect and guard the soul of Thy little servant amidst the many dangers of this corruptible life; and with the assistance of Thy grace guide him by the way of peace to the home of everlasting light. Amen.



# The Notes and References

## Book the First

Page Line

- 1 2 Admonitions, etc. This title is found in the Autograph at the end of the Book: *Expliciunt admonitiones*, etc.
- 1 8 In darkness. John viii, 12.
- 1 21 Manna. Apoc. ii, 17.
- 2 12 Vanity. Eccles i, 2.
- 3 2 Hearing. Eccles i, 8.
- 3 15 Labourer. Properly one who works in the fields.
- 4 22 High-minded. Rom. xi, 20.
- 4 26 Law or Scripture. Rosweyde.
- 4 33 To think nothing of. Latin: *Nihil tenere de*. Flemish: *Niets houden van*. Literally: To have no liking for. But it is used here as antithesis to our good opinion of others. *Niets aen zich zelven toeschryven*. Hanicq, 1831. *N'estimer rien de soi*. Marillac.
- 5 26 See not. Jer. v, 21.
- 5 28 Kinds and qualities. In Latin: *de generibus et specibus*. Rosweyde has: *soorten oft gedaenten*.
- 6 3 Unto us. John viii, 25.
- 7 3 Conflict. Wisd. x, 12.
- 7 10 Study. Latin: *Speculatio*. Van Winghe, an. 1548, has: *Aenschouwen oft aensien ons verstants*. Rosweyde: *Aenschouwen des verstants*.
- 8 17 Thoughts. Rom. i, 21.
- 8 23 Christ. Phil. iii, 8.
- 9 23 Seek counsel. . . . Book of Tob. iv, 19, has: *Consilium sapiente perquire*. A Kempis: *Cum sapiente consilium habe*.
- 9 28 Experience. Eccles xxxiv, 9.
- 10 10 Unto salvation. Rosweyde.
- 10 22 For ever. Ps. cxvi, 2.
- 10 24 Persons. Col. iii, 25.
- 11 3 Displease thee. The text of A Kempis differs here from Eccles viii, 9, in the Vulgate: *Ne despicias narrationem presbyterorum*. A Kempis has: *Nec displiceant tibi parabolæ seniorum*.
- 12 5 In the heart. Rosweyde.
- 12 22 Presumptuous. Cf. Judith vi, 15.
- 13 5 What is in man. John ii, 25.
- 13 23 Man. Eccles viii, 22.
- 14 12 To darken has here the meaning of to displease, or offend, and is used by way of antithesis to shine.
- 15 27 Circumstances. Marillac: *quelque occasion*.
- 18 21 Of the Lord. 2 Paral. xx, 17.
- 18 32 Our souls in peace. Lamennais; Luke xxi, 19.
- 20 31 Weary of. Job x, 1.
- 21 1 With Christ. Phil. i, 23.

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- 21 13 Temptation. In the Greek text the last word of this sentence means temptation, and this is the reading of A Kempis. In the Vulgate it is militia, warfare. Job vii, 1.
- 21 18 Devour. 1 Pet. v, 8.
- 21 28 In virtue. Rosweyde.
- 21 30 Reprobate. Eccles ix, 11.
- 23 4 Iron. Eccles xxxi, 31.
- 23 14 A poet. Ovid, Remed. am. 91. A Kempis quotes only the first line: Principiis obsta: sero medicina paratur. But most editions add the second line, which must be, at least mentally, supplied.
- 24 11 Bear it. 1 Cor. x, 13.
- 24 14 God. 1 Pet. v, 6.
- 24 14 Of spirit. Ps. xxxiii, 19.
- 25 14 Special liking. Rosweyde.
- 26 2 Beyond his own views. Latin: Ultra proprium videre. Flemish: Verder dan syn goeddunken strekt. Rosweyde and others passim.
- 26 25 Of God. Rosweyde.
- 29 15 Burdens. Gal. vi, 2.
- 30 10 Blame. Phil. iii, 6.
- 30 24 Sorrow. Ps. cxiv, 3.
- 30 25 Congregation. Rosweyde.
- 30 32 Furnace. Prov. xxvii, 21.
- 31 26 In this world. John xii, 25.
- 33 28 Befalleth him. Rosweyde.
- 34 12 More virtuous. Rosweyde.
- 35 12 Not his. Jer. x, 23.
- 35 31 Or in the evening. The meaning of A Kempis is that we should make at least one meditation every day. What follows refers to morning and night prayers.
- 37 22 Revealed in us. Rom. viii, 18.
- 37 28 His goods. A Kempis takes this text from the Communion of the Mass Sacerdotes, of Confessors Pontiffs.
- 38 4 Retirement. Rosweyde. A Kempis means what is commonly called a Retreat.
- 38 20 An ancient philosopher. Seneca, Ep. vii.
- 38 32 Multitude. John v, 13.
- 39 24 Than thou art. Rosweyde.
- 40 14 Beds. Ps. iv, 5.
- 41 10 Concupiscence thereof. 1 John ii, 17.
- 41 21 They bite. Prov. xxiii, 32.
- 41 27 Lasteth long. Eccles ii, 11.
- 41 28 By seeing and hearing. Rosweyde.
- 42 26 True devotion. Rosweyde.



Page Line

- 43 13 Compunction. Rosweyde adds: or devotion of heart.  
 45 8 In measure. Ps. lxxix, 6.  
 45 27 Infirm and weak. 1 Cor. xi, 30.  
 46 25 My necessities. Ps. xxiv, 17.  
 47 20 Time to do. Ps. cxviii, 126.  
 47 25 Refreshment. Ps. lxxv, 12.  
 48 2 Pass away. Ps. lvi, 2.  
 48 4 By life. 2 Cor. v, 4.  
 49 7 Not be found. 1 Macc. ii, 63.  
 50 18 Will come. Luke xii, 40.  
 51 16 Acceptable time. 2 Cor. vi, 2.  
 52 8 Taken hence. This is the meaning of *de corpore extracti*. See Van Winghe, Rosweyde, Marillac, etc.  
 52 16 By war. *Latrocinium*, see Riddle III, Facciolati, etc. It is evident that A Kempis puts fire and sword, pest and war, in juxtaposition.  
 52 32 Everlasting dwellings. Luke xvi, 9.  
 53 4 Lasting city. Heb. xiii, 14.  
 53 5 To heaven. Rosweyde.  
 53 29 Favourably heard. Latin, *exaudibilis*; Flemish, *verhoorlyck*. Rosweyde.  
 54 3 Here. Rosweyde: in this world.  
 54 25 In what things. Vulgate, *per quæ*; A Kempis, in *quibus*.  
 54 25 Most. Rosweyde, *aldermeest*.  
 55 17 Afflicted them. Wisd. v, i.  
 55 27 Foolish. 1 Cor. iv, 10.  
 55 30 Stop its mouth. Ps. cvi, 42.  
 56 15 Earth-born. Ps. xlviii, 3.  
 56 28 Therefore. Rosweyde.  
 56 33 Not bear anything. Cf. Riddle.  
 58 7 A religious. Construction of Rosweyde.  
 58 16 Rest. *Ecclus li*, 35.  
 58 24 As one. Thought to be A Kempis himself.  
 59 9 Will of God. Rom. xii, 2.  
 59 13 With its riches. Ps. xxxvi, 3.  
 60 4 The virtue. Rosweyde.  
 61 19 Into mortal sin. Rosweyde.  
 61 24 Rule of their order. Rosweyde  
 62 27 All in all. 1 Cor. xv, 28.

Book the Second

- 65 2 Admonitions, etc. This title is found in the Autograph at the end of the Book: *Expliciunt*, etc.  
 65 6 Within you. Luke xvii, 21.  
 65 8 Be converted. Joel ii, 12.  
 65 15 Upon thee. Luke xi, 20.

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- 65 17 Holy Ghost. Rom. xiv, 17.  
 65 21 In thy heart. Rosweyde.  
 65 22 Within. Ps. xlv, 14.  
 66 3 With him. John xiv, 23.  
 66 4 In thy heart. Rosweyde.  
 66 11 For ever. John xii, 34.  
 66 23 For the best. Rosweyde.  
 66 25 Lasting city. Heb. xiii, 14.  
 67 7 Most High. From the Latin, *Cogitatio apud Altissimum*. Wisd. v, 16.  
 67 25 Blasphemers. Rosweyde.  
 68 11 Heavenly things. Literally, raise himself above himself.  
     Cf. Cornelius ■ Lapide, *In Threnos*.  
 68 15 Taught by God. Isa. liv, 13.  
 69 26 Experience. Rosweyde.  
 70 1 To help. 2 Paral. xxv, 8.  
 71 15 In heart. Rosweyde.  
 72 10 Preferreth. Rosweyde: *Heeft veel liever*.  
 72 14 Grace. Rosweyde adds: *Of God*.  
 73 10 Understandeth. Rosweyde: *Begyrypt*.  
 74 1 He that hath. Rosweyde.  
 74 7 Lose his fervour. Rosweyde.  
 75 17 What thou seest and hearest. Rosweyde.  
 75 23 Of heart with God. Rosweyde.  
 75 24 All the rest. Rosweyde.  
 76 19 Not reprehend thee. 1 John iii, 21.  
 76 24 Saith the Lord. Isa. xlvi, 22.  
 76 30 Perish. Ps. cxlv, 4.  
 77 2 Of our Lord. Gal. vi, 14.  
 77 5 Followeth in the wake. Rosweyde.  
 77 7 A pure conscience. Rosweyde.  
 77 30 The heart. 1 Kings xvi, 7.  
 77 33 Yet. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 77 33 To think little of oneself. For the meaning of *dese tenere*, see *supra*, p. 4, l. 33. *Avoir une petite estime de soi*. Marillac.  
 78 4 In God. Rosweyde.  
 78 10 Commendeth. 2 Cor. x, 18.  
 78 20 Love for love. *Lief om lief*. Van Winghe, Rosweyde.  
 78 28 With the frail. Rosweyde: *met den broosen*.  
 79 16 Thy hope and comfort. Rosweyde.  
 79 21 Of the field. Isa. xl, 6.  
 79 26 But Jesus. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 80 17 For thee. John xi, 28.  
 80 20 Thy heart. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 82 12 Ab intus, of heart. Rosweyde.  
 82 16 Sweet. Ps. xxxiii, 9.  
 82 33 A great calm. Tob. iii, 22.

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- 83 17 He rideth an easy saddle. The Latin: Satis suaviter equitat, is A Kempis's rendering of the Flemish: Hy ryd op een sacht peerd (Rosweyde). Literally: He rideth ■ soft horse. Marillac has: Celui-là chemine bien doucement.
- 84 11 By self-love. The meaning of Stat super seipsum here is determined by its antithesis in the next sentence: Amator Christi.
- 85 7 Be moved. Ps. xxix, 7.
- 85 31 Suddenly. Job vii, 18.
- 86 27 The Lord. Rosweyde.
- 86 28 Of life. Apoc. ii, 7.
- 86 29 To man. Construction of Rosweyde.
- 87 9 To labour. Job v, 7.
- 87 24 Puris mentibus, pure hearts. Rosweyde.
- 87 27 Waiteth. Rosweyde.
- 88 5 Upon us. Rosweyde.
- 88 8 Rightly given. Rosweyde.
- 88 10 Is withheld. Rosweyde uses the present tense.
- 88 13 Compunction. Rosweyde: The spiritual sorrow of my heart.
- 88 14 Grace of contemplation. Van Winghe: Gratien van contemplatien.
- 88 15 Conceited. Rosweyde.
- 88 28 That are God's. Matt. xxii, 21.
- 89 9 Vainglory. Gal. v, 26.
- 89 15 From God. John v, 44.
- 90 13 Of His table. Ecclus vi, 10.
- 90 19 Seek. Cf. Riddle, Sequor II, 5.
- 91 17 The price of him. Prov. xxxi, 10.
- 91 18 His substance. Cant. viii, 7.
- 92 5 Unprofitable servants. Luke xvii, 10.
- 92 9 And poor. Ps. xxiv, 16.
- 92 13 Account himself the least of all. Rosweyde.
- 92 18 Cross. Matt. xvi, 24.
- 92 22 Everlasting fire. Matt. xxv, 41.
- 93 16 His own Cross. John xix, 17.
- 94 6 Some spiritual trouble. Marillac.
- 94 10 Burdensome. Job vii, 20.
- 94 28 Cast thine eyes. For the meaning of the word Converte in this instance, see among others, Riddle III.
- 95 19 Into His glory. Luke xxiv, 46, 26.
- 96 16 The suffering is. Rosweyde.
- 96 18 Acceptable. Tob. xii, 13.
- 96 23 Shunneth. Rosweyde's construction.
- 96 26 Into subjection. 1 Cor. ix, 27.
- 96 31 Thou wilt find. Van Winghe inserts: So bevindy; Rosweyde: Ghy bevinde; others, passim.

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- 97 19 By disposing thyself to patient endurance. Rosweyde.  
 97 30 The glory to come. Rom. v, 18.  
 98 8 To suffer and to die. Rosweyde.  
 98 15 My name's sake. Acts ix, 16.  
 99 20 But now. Rosweyde.  
 99 21 Accompany Him. Sequor, Sall. to accompany. Riddle.  
 99 25 Follow Me. Matt. xvi, 24.  
 99 29 Kingdom of God. Acts xiv, 21.

## Book the Third

- 101 7 Refresh you. Matt. xi, 28.  
 101 9 The world. John vi, 52.  
 101 11 Commemoration of Me. 1 Cor. xi, 24.  
 101 13 And I in him. John vi, 57.  
 101 14 Spirit and life. John vi, 64.  
 102 16 Refresh you. Matt. xi, 28.  
 102 23 Contain Thee. 3 Kings viii, 27.  
 103 5 Approach Thee. Rosweyde.  
 103 8 From the impending flood. Rosweyde.  
 103 21 In laudem. Rosweyde: In honour.  
 103 28 The poorest. Felix II, Rich. Ov. Riddle.  
 103 31 To prepare my soul for Thy visit. Rosweyde.  
 103 32 I might. Rosweyde.  
 104 15 Hallowed contents. Van Winghe, Rosweyde, etc.  
 Heiligdom.  
 104 26 Of Israel. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 104 30 His might. 2 Kings vi, 14.  
 104 33 Divers kinds. 2 Paral. xxiii, 13.  
 105 28 From these pilgrimages. Rosweyde.  
 105 32 God and Man. Rosweyde.  
 105 33 And here. Rosweyde.  
 106 17 To advance in perfection. Rosweyde.  
 107 6 Redemption. 1 Cor. i, 30.  
 107 24 Priests. Heb. vii, 23.  
 107 31 Of our souls. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 108 4 Refresh you. Matt. xi, 28.  
 108 20 Come to me. Luke i, 43.  
 109 1 Exceeding charity. Eph. ii, 4.  
 109 8 Agreeable to me. This is the sense of Rosweyde's rendering.  
 110 8 To the world. John vi, 33, 51.  
 110 11 Is shown us here. Rosweyde.  
 110 21 Were made. Ps. cxlviii, 5.  
 110 31 In want of nothing. 2 Macc. xiv, 35.  
 112 10 For the poor. Ps. lxxvii, 11.  
 112 16 Lifted up my soul. Ps. lxxxv, 4.  
 112 23 To receive. Rosweyde.

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113	5 In the way. Matt. xv, 32.
113	22 From his youth. Gen. viii, 21.
113	24 Into sin. Rosweyde.
114	7 Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.
114	8 Thy kindness towards us. From the blessing of the Paschal Candle, which is attributed to St Augustine, both in the Gothic and in the Gallican Sacramentary. See S. Aug. Opera Omnia; tom. xi, Sermo 1, not.
114	11 Angelic Spirits. Construction of Rosweyde.
114	14 Happy heart. Rosweyde.
114	18 Such a soul. Supplied by Rosweyde.
114	25 The furniture. Gen. ii, 1.
114	26 Keep silence before Thee. Hab. ii, 20.
114	31 No bounds. Ps. cxlvi, 5. Carrières.
115	7 Of Thy sweetness. Ps. xx, 4.
115	8 Be disposed. Rosweyde.
115	13 Thy salvation. Ps. cv, 4.
115	17 Mine eyes. Ps. xii, 4.
115	29 Of my heart. 1 Paral. xxix, 17.
115	31 Hast commanded it. Rosweyde's rendering.
116	9 But Thee. Supplied by Rosweyde.
116	31 In trouble. Marillac.
116	32 Without devotion. Rosweyde.
117	16 O Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.
118	4 Refresh you. Matt. xi, 28.
118	15 Uphold me. Ps. cxviii, 116.
118	20 May increase. A Kempis takes this freely from the Postcommunion of the Second Sunday after Pentecost.
120	3 Heed to thyself. 1 Tim. iv, 16.
120	5 The bishop's hands. 2 Tim. i, 6.
120	9 In due season. Num. ix, 13.
120	18 Of worldly people. Rosweyde.
120	18 Like the angels. Van Ween, 1710; Hanicq, 1831.
121	9 Mass. Supplied by Rosweyde.
122	23 To the Blessed Sacrament. Supplied by Rosweyde.
124	21 And live. Ezech. xxxiii, 11.
124	22 His sins. Heb. x, 17.
126	15 My disciple. Luke xiv, 33.
126	23 Is Thine. 1 Paral. xxix, 11.
126	25 Voluntary oblation. Deut. xvi, 10.
127	7 Acceptable altar. Isa. lx, 7.
130	7 In the Book of Job. Job i, 6; ii, 1.
130	11 Shake. Lamennais.
130	18 Retorted against himself. Marillac.
130	31 Mentis, of the heart. Rosweyde.
132	25 Glory of God. That is: that he may give glory to God by a virtuous life.
134	5 Weep for joy. Tob. xi, 11.

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- 134 17 I see Him. Marillac, Lamennais.  
 134 23 Figures retire. Cant. ii, 17.  
 134 24 Cometh. 1 Cor. xiii, 10.  
 134 30 From glory. 2 Cor. iii, 18.  
 135 11 In this mortal life. Rosweyde.  
 135 13 All my desires. Lamennais.  
 135 18 Patience. Heb. vi, 12.  
 136 6 To my feet. Ps. cxviii, 105.  
 136 18 Us securely. Marillac.  
 136 19 Within the veil. Heb. vi, 19.  
 136 27 A great supper. Luke xiv, 16.  
 137 25 Am holy. Lev. xix, 2.  
 138 12 My rest. Isa. lxvi, 1.  
 138 16 With My disciples. Mark xiv, 15; Luke xxii, 12.  
 138 18 The old leaven. 1 Cor. v, 7.  
 138 22 The house-top. Ps. ci, 8.  
 138 24 Of thy soul. Isa. xxxviii, 15.  
 138 31 Any effort of thine. Lamennais.  
 139 33 Of life. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 140 1 Neglect not. 1 Tim. iv, 14.  
 140 17 Very confused. Construction of Rosweyde.  
 141 10 Despise me. Cant. viii, 1.  
 141 26 United. Marillac.  
 141 27 Out of thousands. Cant. v, 10.  
 142 1 Nothing but. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 142 3 A hidden God. Isa. xlv, 15.  
 142 6 Thy spirit. Wisd. xii, 1.  
 142 7 Thy children. Wisd. xvi, 21.  
 142 11 So nigh them. Deut. iv, 7.  
 142 19 Our Lord. Deus, in reference to Christ, must here be rendered by our Lord.  
 142 25 To the Lord. Ps. cxv, 12.  
 143 13 Fear Thee. Ps. xxx, 20. Carrières.  
 144 7 Probabile argumentum. Rosweyde: Een seker teeken,  
     ■ sure sign.  
 144 10 Breaking of bread. Luke xxiv, 35.  
 144 11 With the love. Rosweyde.  
 146 23 Empty vessels. 4 Kings iv, 3.  
 146 30 Be enlarged. Isa. lx, 5.  
 146 31 With him. Luke i, 66.  
 147 1 Be blessed. Ps. cxxxvii, 4.  
 147 3 In vain. Ps. xxiii, 4.  
 148 21 One spirit. 1 Cor. vi, 17.  
 150 11 According to thy word. Luke i, 38.  
 150 22 The Bridegroom's voice. John iii, 29.  
 151 14 And tongues. Dan. vii, 14.  
 151 19 Holy Mass. Supplied to complete the sense.  
 151 28 Poor sinner. Rosweyde.

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- 152 13 By glory. Prov. xxv, 27.  
 152 17 Closely followeth. Rosweyde.  
 152 24 Search into. Ecclus iii, 22.  
 152 31 Subject to God. Jas. iv, 7.  
 153 13 Fly from thee. Jas. iv, 7.  
 153 29 To little ones. Ps. cxviii, 130.  
 153 30 Pure minds. Luke xxiv, 45.

## Book the Fourth

- 155 7 In me. Ps. lxxxiv, 9.  
 155 14 A faint sound of the divine whisper. Job iv, 12. Cf.  
     Carrières. Venas susurri, i.e., parum ex eo.  
 155 30 Senses. Marillac, Lamennais.  
 155 31 Will speak. Ps. lxxxiv, 9.  
 156 16 Thy servant heareth. 1 Kings iii, 10.  
 156 20 Thy testimonies. Ps. cxviii, 125.  
 156 23 As the dew. Deut. xxxii, 2.  
 156 26 Lest we die. Exod. xx, 19.  
 157 11 The understanding. Luke xxiv, 45.  
 157 12 Revealest the meaning of hidden things. Rosweyde.  
 157 22 The words. Clamant verbis, abl. for acc.  
 158 1 Of eternal life. John vi, 69.  
 158 10 My son. In the use of My son, or simply Son, I have  
     followed Rosweyde.  
 158 15 Spirit and life. John vi, 64.  
 158 15 To be understood. Rosweyde : verstaen.  
 158 19 Of men. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 158 25 Evil days. Ps. xciii, 12, 13.  
 159 12 The sea. Isa. xxiii, 4.  
 159 29 Eternal. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 159 32 Hope often faileth them. Job xl, 28.  
 160 20 In the last day. John xii, 48.  
 160 28 Can say. Audeo, to be able. Cf. Riddle. Rosweyde has  
     kan.  
 161 5 Should be idle. Wisd. xiv, 5.  
 161 9 Thy face from me. Ps. xxvi, 9.  
 161 12 Unto Thee. Ps. cxlii, 6.  
 161 13 To do Thy will. Ps. cxlii, 10.  
 161 22 In truth. 3 Kings ii, 4.  
 161 24 Of thy heart. Wisd. i, 1.  
 162 1 Free indeed. John viii, 36.  
 162 10 In my sight. 1 John iii, 22.  
 163 3 To distress. Displiceo, cf. Riddle.  
 163 3 Earthly loss. Rosweyde.  
 163 5 Before me. Tob. iii, 5.  
 163 15 Of the Almighty. 2 Macc. vii, 38.  
 163 22 Seldom. Rosweyde.

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- 164 16 Of my soul. Supplied in imitation of Rosweyde, supra,  
Book III, ch. i, 12.
- 164 21 Of my trouble. Ps. lviii, 17.
- 164 30 Thee. Supplied by Rosweyde.
- 165 2 Beareth all wrongs aright. In his Latin, Fert æqualiter  
omne inæquale, A Kempis imitates the Flemish given  
by Rosweyde, Verdraeght gelyckelyk alle ongelyck.  
Ongelyck means a wrong.
- 165 9 Of God. Supplied by Rosweyde.
- 166 1 Complaineth not, etc. Rosweyde.
- 166 5 Great works. Rosweyde.
- 167 22 Accept willingly. Rosweyde.
- 168 28 Of the heavenly joys. Van Winghe : der hemelsche genu-  
echten.
- 169 10 No illusion. Construction of Rosweyde, who also sup-  
plies : of the enemy.
- 170 6 As a strong warrior. Jer. xx, 11.
- 170 17 Not fear. Ps. xxvi, 1, 3.
- 170 18 My Redeemer. Ps. xviii, 15.
- 170 19 A good soldier. 2 Tim. ii, 3.
- 172 1 The way of man, etc. Jer. x, 23.
- 172 3 Grace and comfort. Rosweyde.
- 173 7 When he experienceth the grace of devotion. Supplied  
by Rosweyde.
- 174 17 Dust and ashes. Gen. xviii, 27.
- 175 2 I knew not. Ps. lxxii, 22.
- 175 21 Of Thee. Supplied by Rosweyde.
- 175 32 Convert us. Ps. lxxxiv, 5.
- 176 22 Little and great, etc. Apoc. xiii, 16.
- 177 11 The soul. Marillac.
- 177 17 God alone. Luke xviii, 19.
- 177 29 That fear Thee. Ps. xxx, 20. Carrières.
- 178 28 Oh, no ! Supplied by Rosweyde.
- 180 6 Of heart. Rosweyde.
- 180 14 Of God. Supplied by Rosweyde.
- 183 8 In the world. Ps. lxxii, 12.
- 183 9 Like smoke. Ps. xxxvi, 20.
- 183 21 Worldly pleasures. Rosweyde.
- 183 24 Dumb beasts. Jude 10.
- 183 28 Thine own will. Eccles xviii, 30.
- 183 30 Of thy heart. Ps. xxxvi, 4.
- 185 9 Than thyself. Construction of Rosweyde.
- 185 9 Thine inferior appetite. Supplied by Rosweyde.
- 185 22 Out of nothing. 2 Macc. vii, 28.
- 186 4 The dirt of the streets. Ps. xvii, 43.
- 186 10 Spared thee. Ezech. xx, 17.
- 186 28 In Thy sight. Job xv, 15.
- 186 30 Wickedness. Job iv, 18.



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187	1	Spare them. 2 Pet. ii, 4.
187	8	Bread of angels. Ps. lxxvii, 25.
187	21	By Thee. Supplied by Rosweyde.
187	24	Of ourselves. Supplied by Rosweyde.
187	33	Of nothing. Rosweyde.
188	3	Nothing at all. Rosweyde.
188	9	Against the potter. Isa. xxix, 16.
188	14	Self-complacency. Supplied by Rosweyde.
188	16	He thinketh. Supplied by Rosweyde.
188	19	For ever. Ps. cxvi, 2.
190	5	Labour with me. Wisd. ix, 10.
190	28	I will rest. Ps. iv, 9.
191	4	All. Marillac.
191	22	For as much as thou needest them. Supplied by Rosweyde.
191	29	Thereby. Supplied by Rosweyde.
192	4	Is in heaven. Phil. iii, 20.
192	18	Threaten for ever. Ps. cii, 9.
192	20	Upon God. Ps. liv, 23.
192	31	Care upon. 1 Pet. v, 7.
194	6	Not constrained by necessity. Van Winghe.
195	18	To go that way. Marillac.
196	8	Resisted unto blood. Heb. xii, 4.
198	16	Against myself. Ps. xxxi, 5.
198	28	And feel no trouble. Rosweyde, Marillac.
198	30	Mine abjection. Ps. xxiv, 18.
199	20	He shall go to. Jos. i, 9.
199	2	Stick fast. Ps. lxxviii, 15.
200	14	The pride of life. 1 John ii, 16.
200	18	The heart. Rosweyde.
200	20	Under the briers. Job xxx, 7.
201	23	The army of heaven. 3 Kings xxii, 19.
202	12	Of my soul. Supplied in imitation of Rosweyde supra, Book III, ch. i, 12.
202	13	The wings. Ps. liv, 7.
202	17	And see. Ps. xlv, 11.
203	12	Deliver me. Ps. cxliiii, 7.
204	9	With thy servant. Ps. cxviii, 65.
204	13	In Thy presence. Rosweyde.
204	15	Like to Thee. Ps. xxxix, 6.
205	18	I am not worthy. Rosweyde.
206	12	O Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.
206	15	Respect of persons. 1 Pet. i, 17.
206	16	As all good, etc. Construction of Rosweyde.
206	23	Many gifts. Rosweyde.
206	30	Deus, with reference to Christ, must here be rendered by Lord.
207	2	All the earth. Ps. xlv, 17.

## Page Line

- 207 4 Without blame. Phil. iii, 6.  
 207 7 Suffer reproach. Acts v, 41.  
 207 24 O Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 208 28 Do all things. Job xlii, 2.  
 208 31 Work out. Phil. ii, 12.  
 209 3 To my help. Ps. lxx, 12.  
 209 8 The Lord. Rosweyde.  
 209 11 Of secret places. Isa. xlv, 2, 3. The second part of this text is not given literally by A Kempis.  
 209 20 Educ, Drive away. Rosweyde.  
 209 23 Violence against me. Ps. xxxvii, 13.  
 209 26 Evil beasts. Lev. xxvi, 6.  
 209 27 In Thy strength. Ps. cxxi, 7.  
 210 4 And Thy truth. Ps. xlii, 3.  
 210 6 Void and empty. Gen. i, 2.  
 210 12 Of virtue. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 210 18 To Thee. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 211 8 Follow thou Me. John xxi, 22.  
 211 15 Implicas; Meddle with them. Rosweyde.  
 211 23 Let the hasty hurry. *Dimitte agitantem agitare* is A Kempis's Latin for the Flemish expression *Laet de driftighe dryven*, given by Rosweyde.  
 212 6 In prayers. 1 Pet. iv, 7.  
 212 14 Give unto you. John xiv, 27.  
 212 22 Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 212 23 To thyself. 1 Tim. iv, 16.  
 213 25 God. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 214 5 Again with joy. Job xxxiii, 26.  
 216 7 Keep nothing for thyself. *Gy en moogt voor uzelfen niets behouden*. *Hanicq*.  
 216 17 Worldly. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 217 21 Even worse. Rosweyde.  
 217 24 Strengthen me. Judith xiii, 9.  
 217 27 The inward man. Eph. iii, 16.  
 218 2 Vexation of spirit. Eccles i, 14.  
 218 5 Heavenly wisdom. Wisd. ix, 4.  
 220 2 From this hour. John xii, 27.  
 220 3 Unto this hour. John xii, 27.  
 220 7 To deliver me. Ps. xxxix, 14.  
 220 14 Be done. Matt. vi, 10.  
 220 17 Go better with me. Rosweyde.  
 220 23 My mercy. Ps. lviii, 18.  
 220 26 Most High. Ps. lxxvi, 11.  
 221 ■ Day of trouble. Nahum i, 7.  
 221 23 Nigh. Phil. iv, 5.  
 221 26 Hard to Me. Gen. xviii, 14.  
 222 7 The evil thereof. Matt. vi, 34.  
 222 21 Be afraid. John xiv, 27.

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223	15	Imagining to be. Rosweyde.
223	22	Perfect gift. Jas. i, 17.
223	30	Overcome with grief. Marillac.
224	2	Spare thee not. Job vi, 10.
224	3	Also loved you. John xv, 9.
224	21	Prophet David. Supplied by Rosweyde.
224	23	At rest. Ps. liv, 7.
224	24	A single eye. Matt. vi, 22; Luke xi, 34. Rosweyde adds: That is, ■ pure intention.
225	30	Sweetness. Supplied by Rosweyde.
226	1	Habetur, Attend but little. Rosweyde.
226	16	So many imperfections. Rosweyde, who now inserts: It is with us as it was in the days of Noe.
226	18	Corrupted its way. Gen. vi, 12.
226	27	Often. Supplied by Rosweyde.
226	30	It is asked. Repeated by Rosweyde.
227	2	A multis tacetur. Commonly passed over in silence. Rosweyde.
227	11	Of heart. Supplied by Rosweyde.
227	15	Of the reward and thus show. Proprietarius, term of devotion (ascetic) denoting a soul which does not serve God with a disinterested love, but rather in the hope of a recompense. Dict. des Dict. Mgr Paul Guérin, second edit., 1892-1894, vol. v, p. 1012.
227	20	Are Jesus Christ's. Phil. ii, 21.
227	26	Cupidinem, thy desires. Lamennais.
227	31	Of one day. 1 Esdras x, 13.
228	21	Be made rich. Apoc. iii, 18. Cf. ■ Lapide.
229	2	Mentioned in the Gospel. Supplied by Rosweyde.
230	8	See Lazarus. John xii, 9.
230	23	Eternal. Supplied to make the meaning clear.
230	25	In the world. John ii, 15.
231	31	From on high. Ps. cxliii, 7.
231	14	The waves thereof. Ps. lxxxviii, 10.
231	16	Delight in wars. Ps. lxxvii, 31.
233	22	Is given manna. Apoc. ii, 17.
233	21	Future glory. Rom. viii, 18.
233	25	Take courage. Ps. xxvi, 14.
235	4	On the Lord. Ps. liv, 23.
235	17	To all men. 1 Cor. ix, 22.
235	19	By man's day. 1 Cor. iv, 3.
235	27	Protected himself. Rosweyde.
235	28	Wicked things. Ps. lxii, 12.
235	30	Boasted to their heart's content. Rosweyde.
236	2	A mortal man. Isa. li, 12.
236	3	Not be found. 2 Macc. ii, 63.
236	8	The judgement of God. Rom. ii, 3.
236	11	Peevish words. 2 Tim. ii, 14.

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- 236 19 According to his works. Matt. xvi, 27.  
 238 18 Cover thee. Ps. cxxxviii, 11.  
 240 7 Wicked men. Van Winghe, Rosweyde.  
 240 14 Os Domini. The mouth of the Lord, that is, Counsel  
 of the Lord. Rosweyde.  
 241 18 Into temptation. Matt. xxvi, 41.  
 241 24 Thou visitest him. Ps. viii, 5.  
 242 7 Informatus, Strengthened. Rosweyde.  
 242 9 The selfsame. Ps. ci, 28.  
 242 16 Pass over. Dan. iv, 22.  
 242 22 No more changed. 1 Kings i, 18.  
 243 5 The greatest vanity. Rosweyde.  
 243 25 Rejoice all day. Ps. lxxxviii, 17.  
 243 26 In mine infirmities. 2 Cor. xii, 5.  
 243 28 One from another. John v, 44.  
 244 15 By vanity. 2 Esdras i, 7.  
 244 16 I find. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 245 4 Depend on any man. Lamennais.  
 245 28 He ascendeth towards God. Construction of Rosweyde.  
 246 21 But in power. 1 Cor. iv, 20.  
 246 26 Any book. Rosweyde.  
 247 3 Man knowledge. Ps. xciii, 10.  
 247 15 With lamps. Soph. i, 12.  
 247 17 Made manifest. 1 Cor. iv, 5.  
 247 33 A certain person. Thought to be A Kempis himself.  
 241 1 Intime. With all his heart. Rosweyde.  
 248 13 Dividing to every one. 1 Cor. xii, 11.  
 248 18 As if thou wert ignorant. Eccles xxxii, 12.  
 249 5 Reditur, Enter into himself. Rosweyde.  
 249 17 Salvation of man. Ps. lix, 13.  
 249 25 Salvation of the just. Ps. xxxvi, 39.  
 250 13 Most faithful friend. Rosweyde.  
 250 16 Agatha. Substituted by Rosweyde for Soul.  
 250 18 Founded in Christ. Eph. iii, 17.  
 251 4 Every man is unreliable. Ps. cxvii. Mendax, infidus.  
 Carrières.  
 251 10 Of his own household. Matt. x, 36.  
 251 12 Or he is there. Matt. xxiv, 23.  
 251 28 For. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 252 2 O Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.  
 252 3 Carried about with every wind. Eph. iv, 14.  
 252 9 Display before men. Rosweyde.  
 253 8 Firm and solid like a stone. Marillac.  
 254 7 Recollected in heart. Rosweyde.  
 254 19 May be revealed. Luke ii, 35.  
 255 2 Make him sad. Prov. xii, 21.  
 255 9 Hearts and reins. Ps. vii, 10.  
 255 14 Strong and patient. Ps. vii, 12.

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255	30	Justify myself. 1 Cor. iv, 4.
255	32	In Thy sight. Ps. cxlii, 2.
257	1	Of this death. Rom. vii, 24.
257	2	Is prolonged. Ps. cxix, 5.
257	3	Cast down headlong. Isa. xxv, 8.
258	4	Happy. Bright. Lamennais rightly renders the superlative by the positive.
258	11	Continuing in the same state. Rosweyde.
259	13	Stand to see. Malach. iii, 2.
260	4	Burdensome to myself. Job vii, 20.
260	11	Far from ■■■. Ps. lxx, 12.
260	12	From Thy servant. Ps. xxvi, 9.
260	14	Thine arrows. Ps. cxliii, 6.
260	29	In heart. Supplied by Rosweyde.
261	6	Thy heart also. Matt. vi, 21.
261	17	That is, into mine inmost heart. Supplied by Rosweyde.
262	24	Especially in humility. Rosweyde.
262	29	Just as. Rosweyde.
263	19	Children of God. Rom. viii, 21.
263	20	In mine eternal home. Rosweyde.
263	27	It is I. Matt. xiv, 27.
263	28	Of God come. Luke xxii, 18.
264	1	Very valiant. Jos. i, 7.
264	9	But. Inserted by Rosweyde in these five sentences.
264	26	To ■■■ whether. Marillac.
265	24	Of thy heart. Supplied by Rosweyde.
265	27	For thy grief. Isa. lxi, 3.
267	8	From my youth. Ps. lxxxvii, 16.
267	19	Thy servant. Supplied by Rosweyde.
267	20	Of Thy commandments. Ps. cxviii, 32.
267	24	Shined over his head. Job xxix, 3.
267	26	Of Thy wings. Ps. xvi, 8.
268	23	Learn Thy justifications. Ps. cxviii, 71.
268	26	Covered my face. Ps. lxxviii, 8.
269	7	Bringest up again. Tob. xiii, 2.
269	25	Come to pass. Dan. xiii, 41.
270	10	Hearing of the ears. Isa. xi, 3.
270	11	Grant. Supplied by Rosweyde.
270	15	By the evidence of the senses. Lamennais.
270	26	O Lord. Supplied by Rosweyde.
271	10	Of original sin. Rosweyde.
272	7	Revealed in us. Rom. viii, 18.
272	29	Vessels of mercy. Rom. ix, 23.
273	29	Mist of death. Job x, 20, 21.
274	12	A contrite. Ps. I, 19.
275	13	And pilgrims. 1 Pet. ii, 11.
276	9	This failing. Rosweyde.
277	12	Aim at. Prætendunt, tendent. Marillac, Lamennais.

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278	14	For the name of Jesus. Acts v, 41.
279	5	Than to receive. Acts xx, 35.
280	9	For the better gifts. 1 Cor. xii, 31.
280	23	Judgement of God. Marillac, Lamennais.
280	32	Old leaven of original sin. Rosweyde.
282	14	Captivating me. Rom. vii, 23.
283	8	The inward man. Rom. vii, 22.
283	10	Just and good. Rom. vii, 12.
283	12	The law of sin. Rom. vii, 25.
283	15	I find not. Rom. vii, 18.
284	22	Of my heart. Rosweyde.
284	29	No evils. Ps. xxii, 4.
284	31	For. Supplied by Rosweyde.
285	11	Jesus Christ Thy Son. Prayer of the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost.
285	27	The Life. John xiv, 6.
286	3	Unerring. Rosweyde.
286	9	Shall make thee free. John viii, 32.
286	10	Lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. vi, 12.
286	11	Keep the commandments. Matt. xix, 17.
286	14	Thou hast. Matt. xix, 21.
286	19	On earth. Lamennais.
286	28	His lord. John xiii, 16.
286	29	The master. Matt. x, 24.
287	2	If thou doest them. John xiii, 17.
287	6	Manifest Myself to him. John xiv, 21.
287	7	Sit with Me. Apoc. iii, 21.
287	19	Abandon our state. Dit leven verlaten. Rosweyde.
287	27	Goeth before. 1 Kings xii, 2.
287	31	Stain our glory. 1 Macc. ix, 10.
289	11	Be of good heart. Bar. iv, 30.
289	22	Those that mourn. Job v, 11.
289	26	The honeycomb. Ps. xviii, 11.
290	3	Remember me. 2 Esdras xiii, 22.
290	23	Is right. Ps. cxviii, 137.
290	25	Justified in themselves. Ps. xviii, 10.
291	2	In the Kingdom of heaven. Matt. xviii, 1.
291	12	But of peace. 1 Cor. xiv, 33.
291	22	Sweetness. Ps. xx, 4.
291	24	I have chosen. John xv, 16.
292	8	The little and the great. Wisd. vi, 8.
293	25	The greater or lesser degree of their glory. Lamennais.
294	15	For ever and ever. Apoc. iv, 10.
294	22	Children of God. Matt. v, 9.
294	24	Shall die. Isa. lx, 22; lxxv, 20. Rosweyde adds: Which meaneth that he who is little here, shall be great there.

## The Notes and References

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Page	Line	
294	31	Kingdom of heaven. Matt. xviii, 3, 4.
295	4	Consolation. Luke vi, 24.
295	8	Kingdom of God. Luke vi, 20.
295	19	Whose mercy is infinite. Rosweyde, Marillac.
296	7	Friend. Supplied by Rosweyde.
296	9	Their own. Phil. ii, 21.
297	20	Look upon <del>me</del> . Ps. xxiv, 16.
297	26	The way of peace. Luke i, 79.

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